

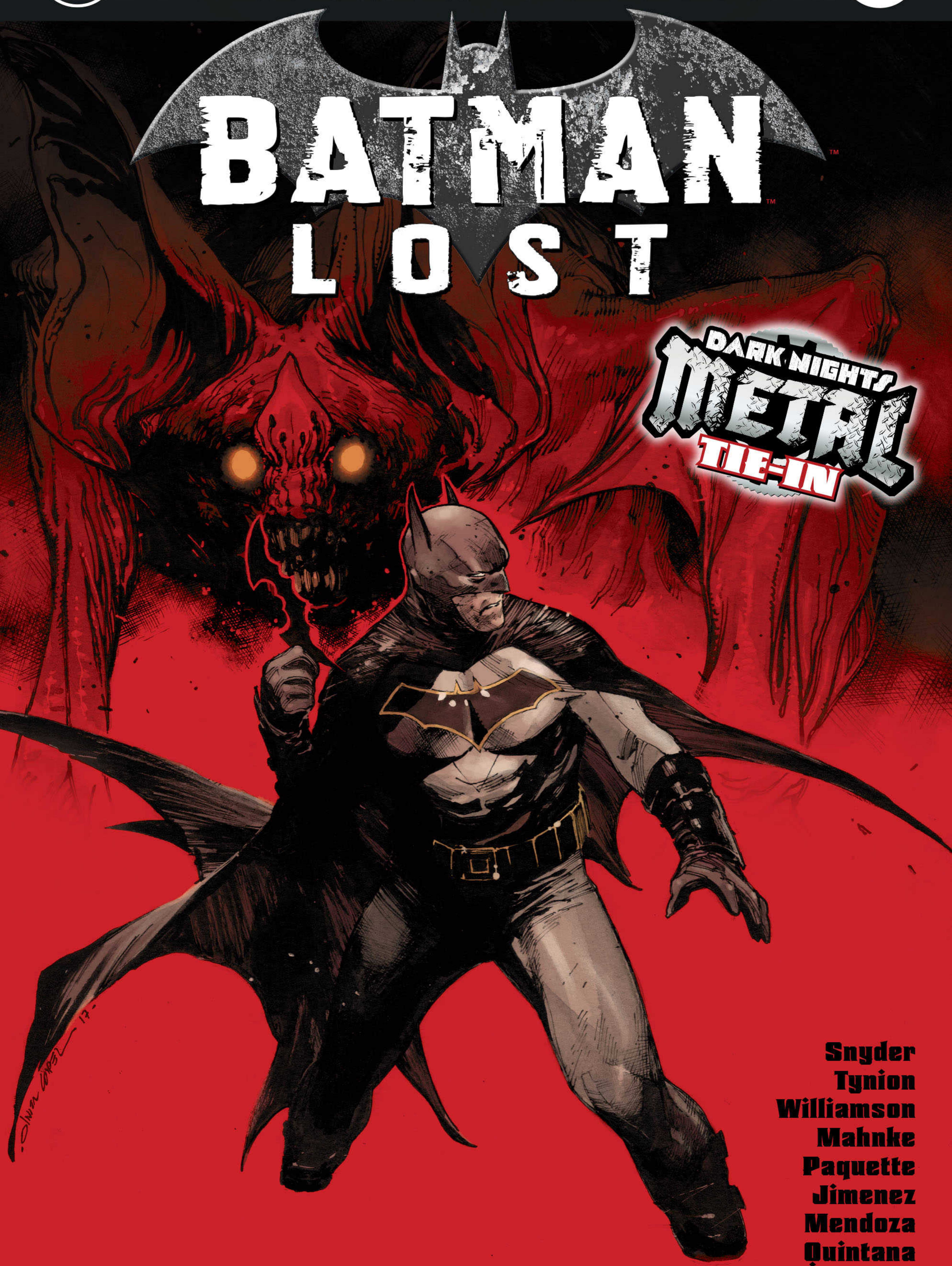


DARK NIGHTS

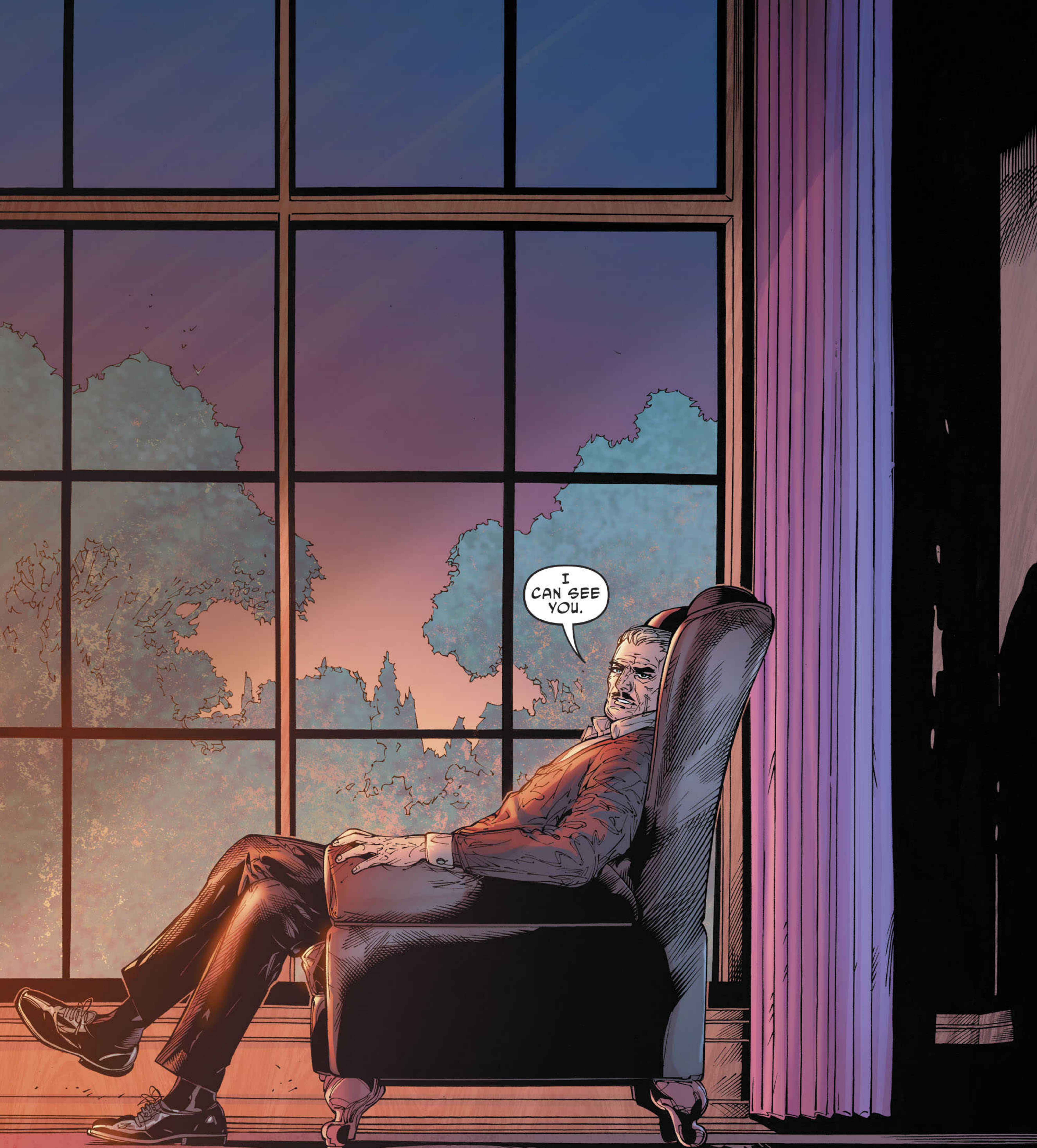
1

BATMAN LOST

**DARK NIGHTS
MET
TIE-IN**



**Snyder
Tynion
Williamson
Mahnke
Paquette
Jimenez
Mendoza
Quintana
Fairbairn
Sanchez**



I
CAN SEE
YOU.

BATMAN LOST

SCOTT SNYDER, JAMES TYNION IV AND JOSHUA WILLIAMSON WRITERS

DOUG MAHNKE, YANICK PAQUETTE AND JORGE JIMENEZ PENCILS JAIME MENDOZA, PAQUETTE AND JIMENEZ INKS

WIL QUINTANA, NATHAN FAIRBAIRN AND ALEJANDRO SANCHEZ COLORS TOM NAPOLITANO LETTERS

OLIVIER COIPEL AND DAVE STEWART COVER SPECIAL THANKS TO GREG CAPULLO

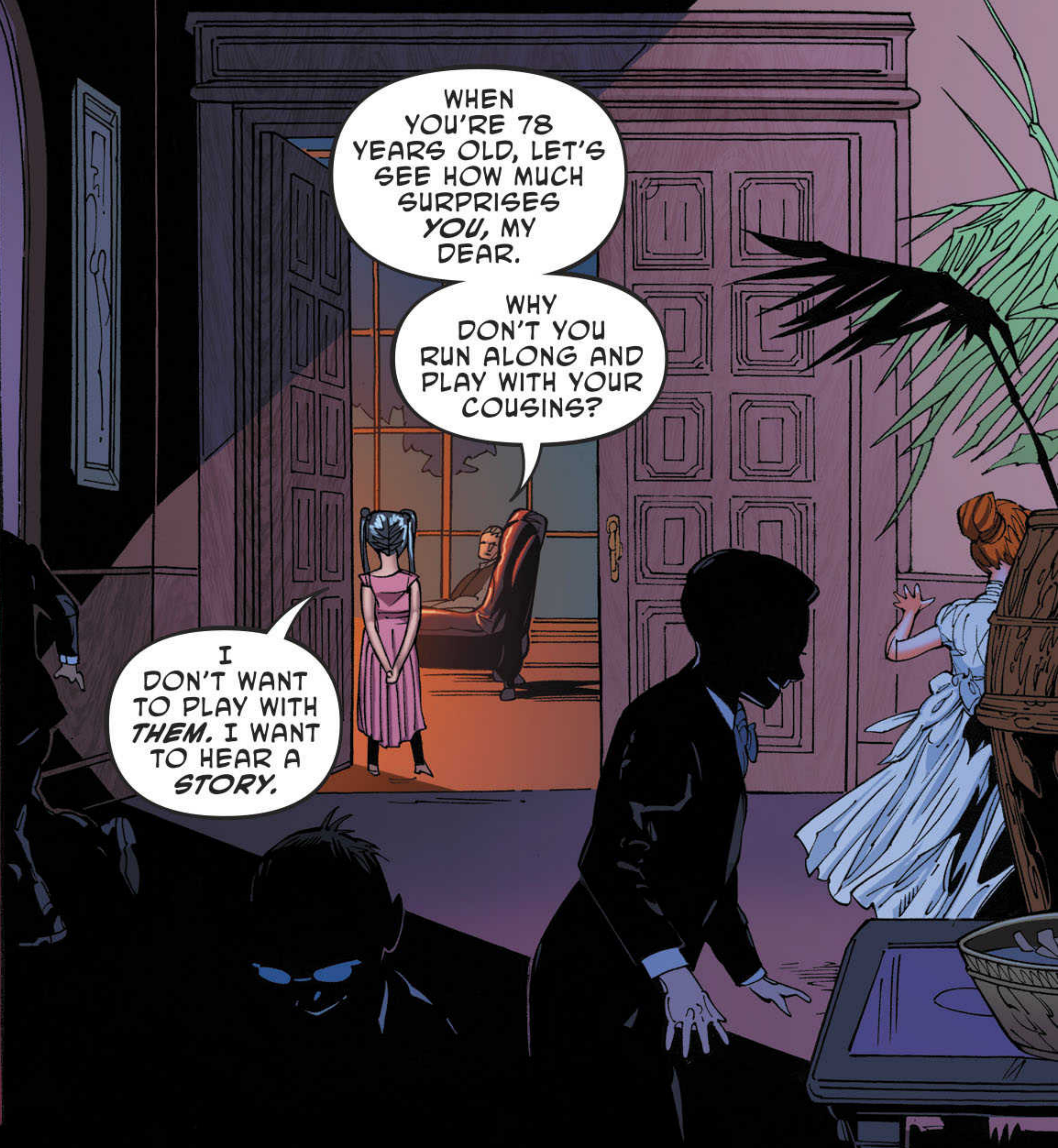
ANDREW MARINO ASSISTANT EDITOR REBECCA TAYLOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR EDDIE BERGANZA EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER. BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY.



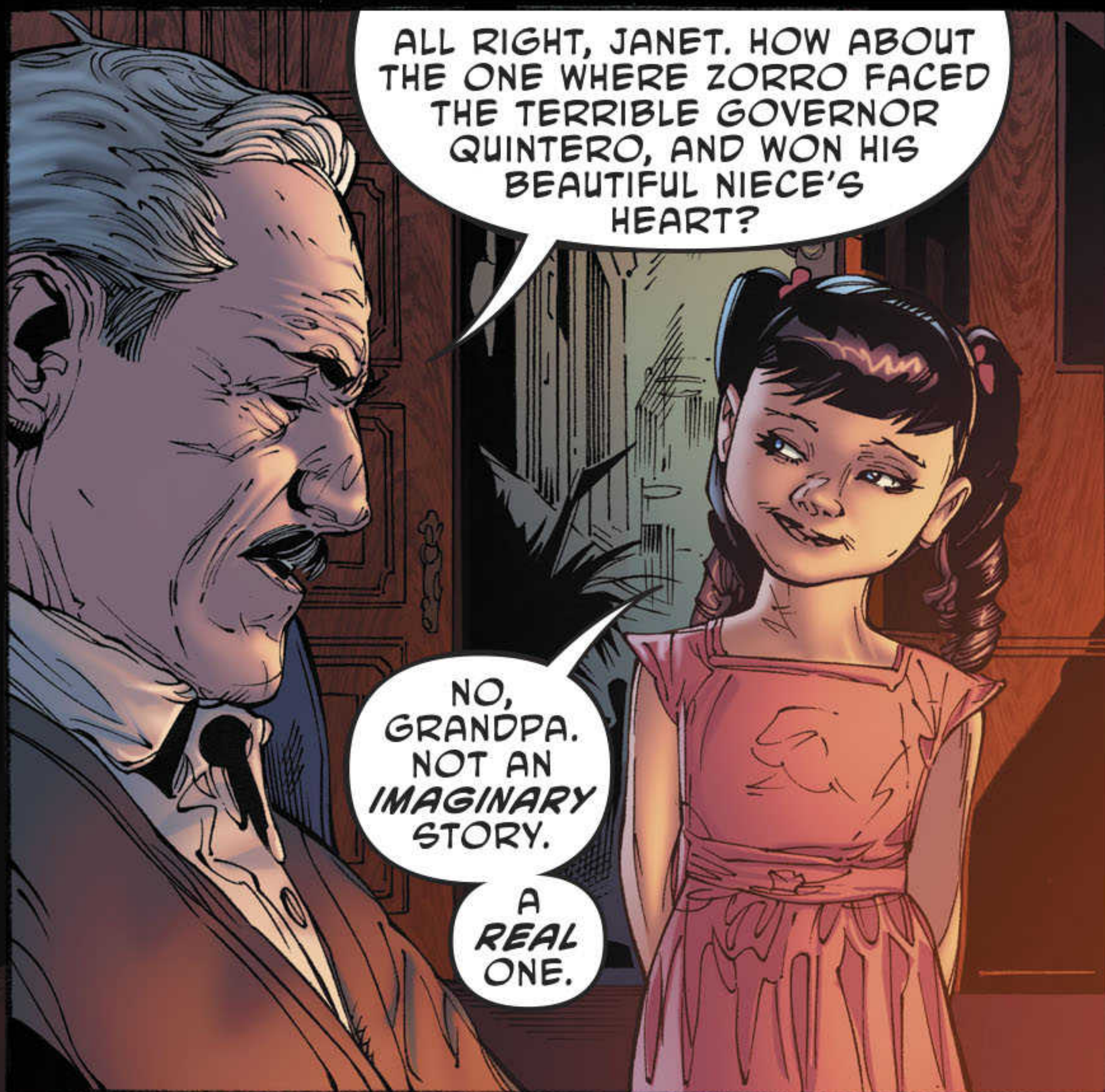
GRANDPA
BRUCE,
YOU *ALWAYS*
RUIN THE
SURPRISE.



WHEN
YOU'RE 78
YEARS OLD, LET'S
SEE HOW MUCH
SURPRISES
YOU, MY
DEAR.

WHY
DON'T YOU
RUN ALONG AND
PLAY WITH YOUR
COUSINS?

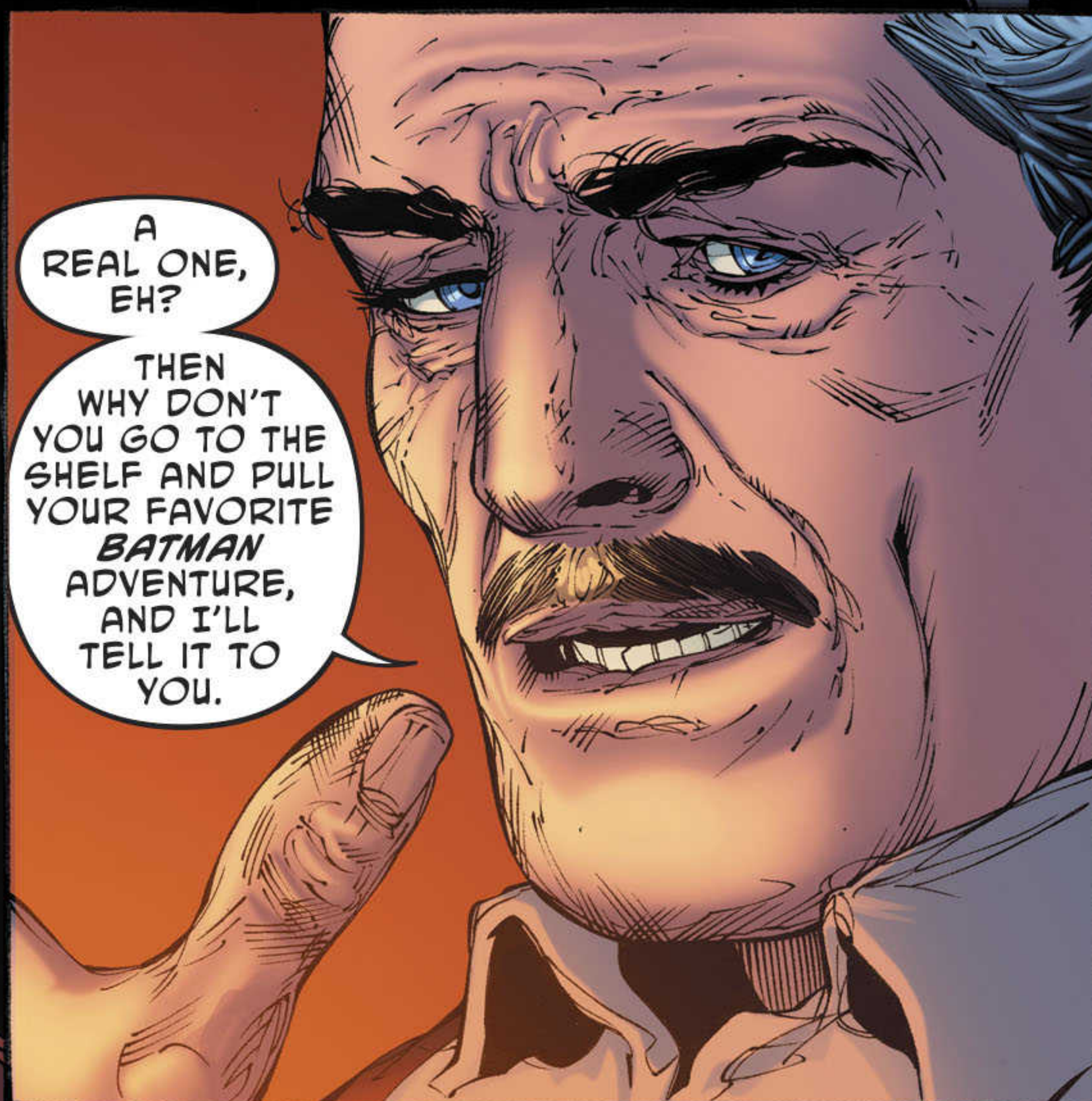
I
DON'T WANT
TO PLAY WITH
THEM. I WANT
TO HEAR A
STORY.



ALL RIGHT, JANET. HOW ABOUT
THE ONE WHERE ZORRO FACED
THE TERRIBLE GOVERNOR
QUINTERO, AND WON HIS
BEAUTIFUL NIECE'S
HEART?

NO,
GRANDPA.
NOT AN
IMAGINARY
STORY.

A
REAL
ONE.



A
REAL ONE,
EH?

THEN
WHY DON'T
YOU GO TO THE
SHELF AND PULL
YOUR FAVORITE
BATMAN
ADVENTURE,
AND I'LL
TELL IT TO
YOU.



THERE
ARE SO
MANY OF
THEM.

THAT'S WHY
I HAD TO START
WRITING THEM DOWN.
OTHERWISE I'D
NEVER BE ABLE
TO REMEMBER
THEM ALL.

HELL,
EVEN THEN,
HALF OF THEM
CONTRADICT
THE OTHER.

BUT
THEY STILL
ALL *HAPPENED*.
I PROMISE
YOU THAT.



HMM, I KNOW.

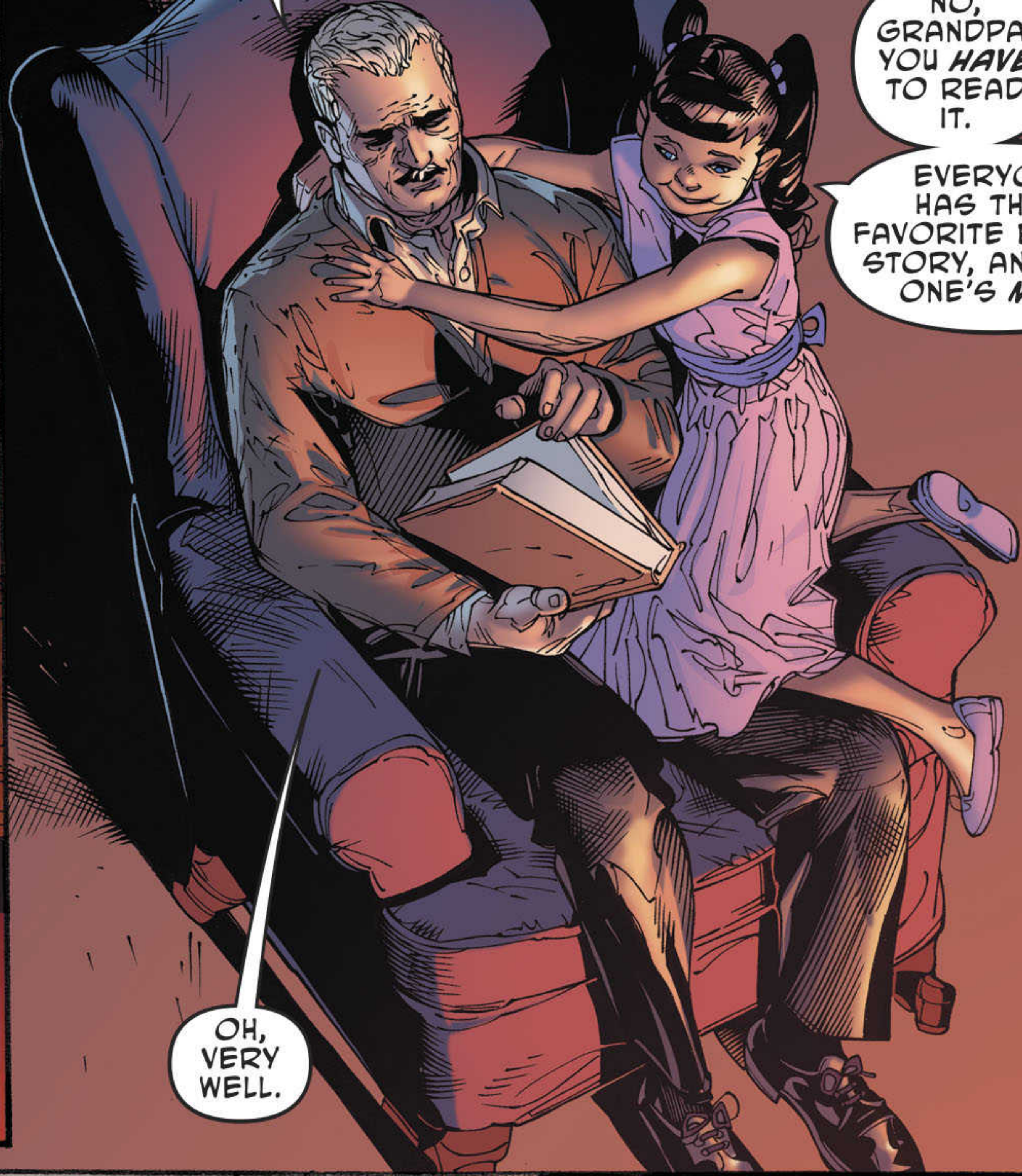
THE CASE OF THE CHEMICAL SYNDICATE. THE DEATH OF MR. LAMBERT.

YOU KNOW, THIS WAS MY *FIRST* CASE. I WAS JUST A YOUNG HERO THEN, STILL TAKING SHAPE. I BARELY KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING.

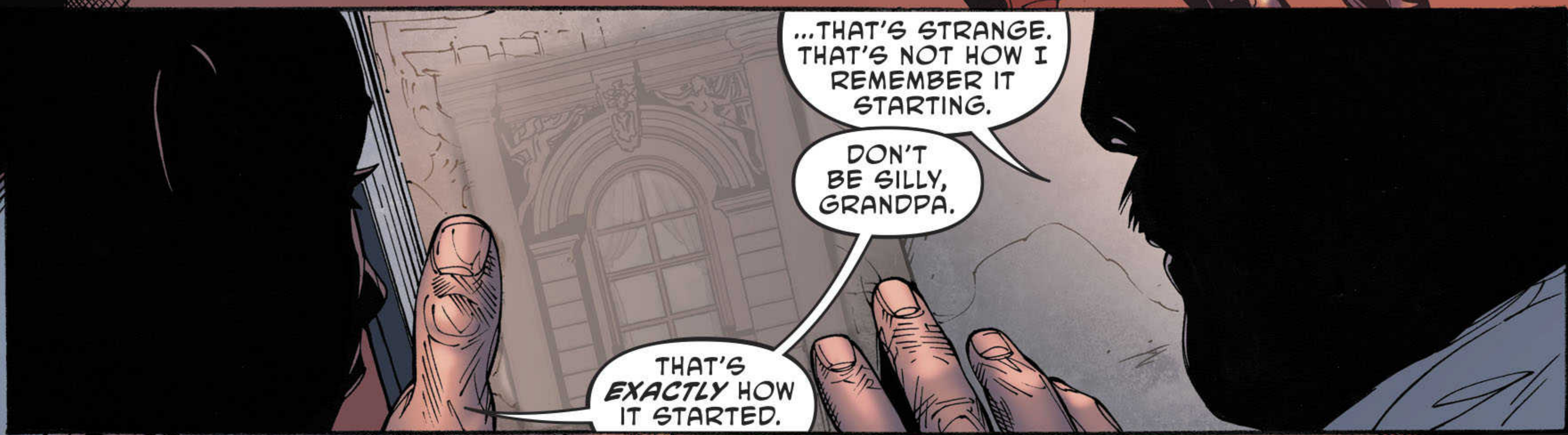
HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LATER, AND A BIT MORE EXCITING? MAYBE THE CASE OF THE LONG HALLOWEEN...

NO, GRANDPA. YOU *HAVE* TO READ IT.

EVERYONE HAS THEIR FAVORITE BATMAN STORY, AND THIS ONE'S *MINE*.



OH, VERY WELL.



...THAT'S STRANGE. THAT'S NOT HOW I REMEMBER IT STARTING.

DON'T BE SILLY, GRANDPA.

THAT'S *EXACTLY* HOW IT STARTED.

YES. THAT'S RIGHT. I'M SORRY, WHAT WAS I THINKING?

IT ALL STARTED WITH A WINDOW...



"AND A SCREAM LOST TO THE DARK."

YOU! I...I KNOW YOU'RE OUT THERE! YOU HEAR ME? I CAN FEEL YOUR EYES ON ME! COME INSIDE AND FACE ME!

I'M ALREADY HERE.

AGH!

WHO... WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

I'M HERE TO HELP.

YOU'RE LIKE THE COPS, AREN'T YOU?! THEY WERE JUST HERE... YOU THINK I DID IT. THAT I KILLED MY FATHER.

I'D NEVER HURT HIM, NEVER!

I KNOW. YOUR PRINTS ON THE KNIFE OVERLAY THE BLOOD. YOU SIMPLY PULLED THE BLADE FROM YOUR FATHER'S CHEST.

NOW, IN YOUR REPORT TO MR. GORDON AND HIS FRIEND BRUCE WAYNE, YOU SAID YOU SAW A SHAPE AT THIS WINDOW.



I DID...YES.
I THOUGHT...I
THOUGHT I SAW
A SHAPE ON
THE OTHER
SIDE.

BUT IT'S A
CURIOUS WINDOW.
IT'S ALWAYS
COVERED IN
BLOOD.

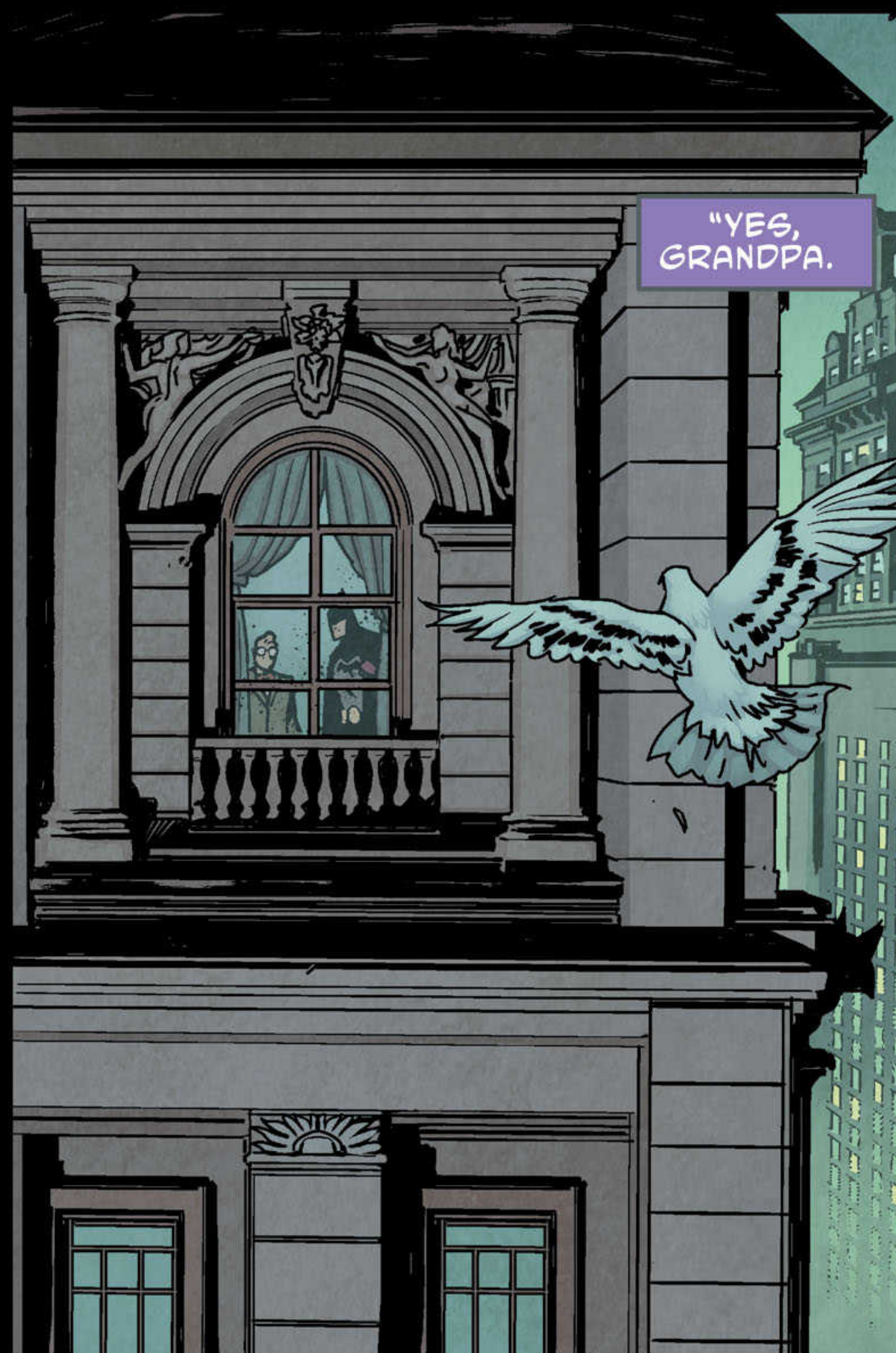
IT'S
THE ANGLE OF
THE PANE. *BIRDS*.
THEY CAN'T SEE
THAT THERE'S
ANYTHING
THERE.

THEY'RE
ALWAYS
CRASHING
INTO IT.



"BLOOD...NO. THIS
ISN'T RIGHT.

"THIS ISN'T HOW
IT HAPPENED."



"YES,
GRANDPA.



"THERE WAS
ALWAYS BLOOD."

"SEE?"

I SEE...

A WAR?

WHERE THE HELL AM I?

AT THE BEGINNING, BATMAN. THE BEGINNING OF YOUR STORY.

THAT'S NOT RIGHT. I KNOW THE BEGINNING OF MY STORY.

AH, GOOD. THEN YOU SHOULD KNOW THE PLAYERS WELL, HERE AT THE DAWN OF MAN.

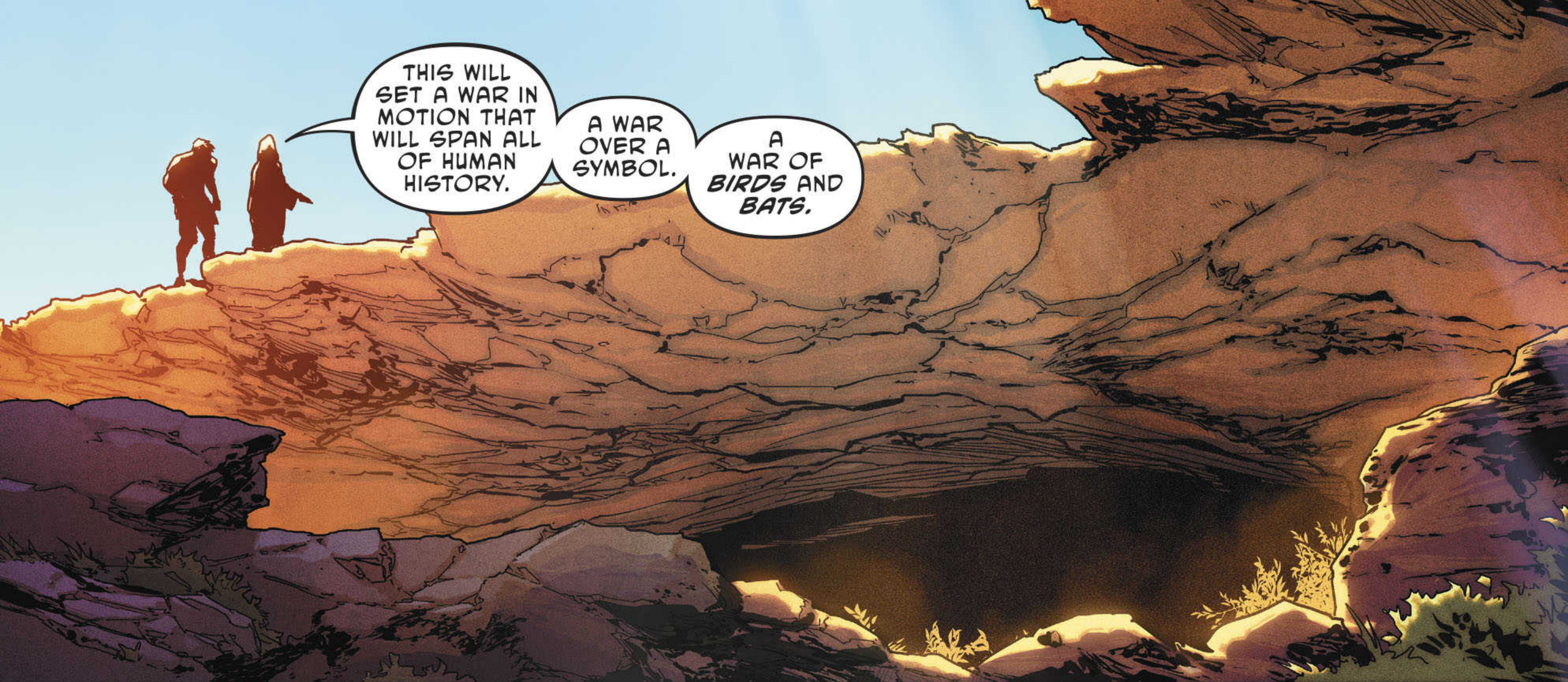
THAT YOUNG HERO, THE LEADER OF THE BAT-TRIBE. IN A COMING LIFE, HE WILL TAKE THE NAME HATH-SET.

I KNOW... I KNOW THAT NAME. HOW...

LIKE YOU SAID, BATMAN. YOU KNOW YOUR STORY. AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

THE BIRD TRIBE NOW KNOWS WHAT EVIL HAS BEEN WHISPERING INTO HIS EAR. THEY KNOW THE DARKNESS HE WILL BRING INTO THIS WORLD.

SOON THE YOUNG WARRIOR WILL TAKE THE STRANGE METAL, AND STRIKE DOWN THE LEADERS OF THE BIRDS, THE ONES WHO WILL RETURN OVER MANY LIVES AS HAWKMAN AND HAWKGIRL.



THIS WILL
SET A WAR IN
MOTION THAT
WILL SPAN ALL
OF HUMAN
HISTORY.

A WAR
OVER A
SYMBOL.

A
WAR OF
BIRDS AND
BATS.



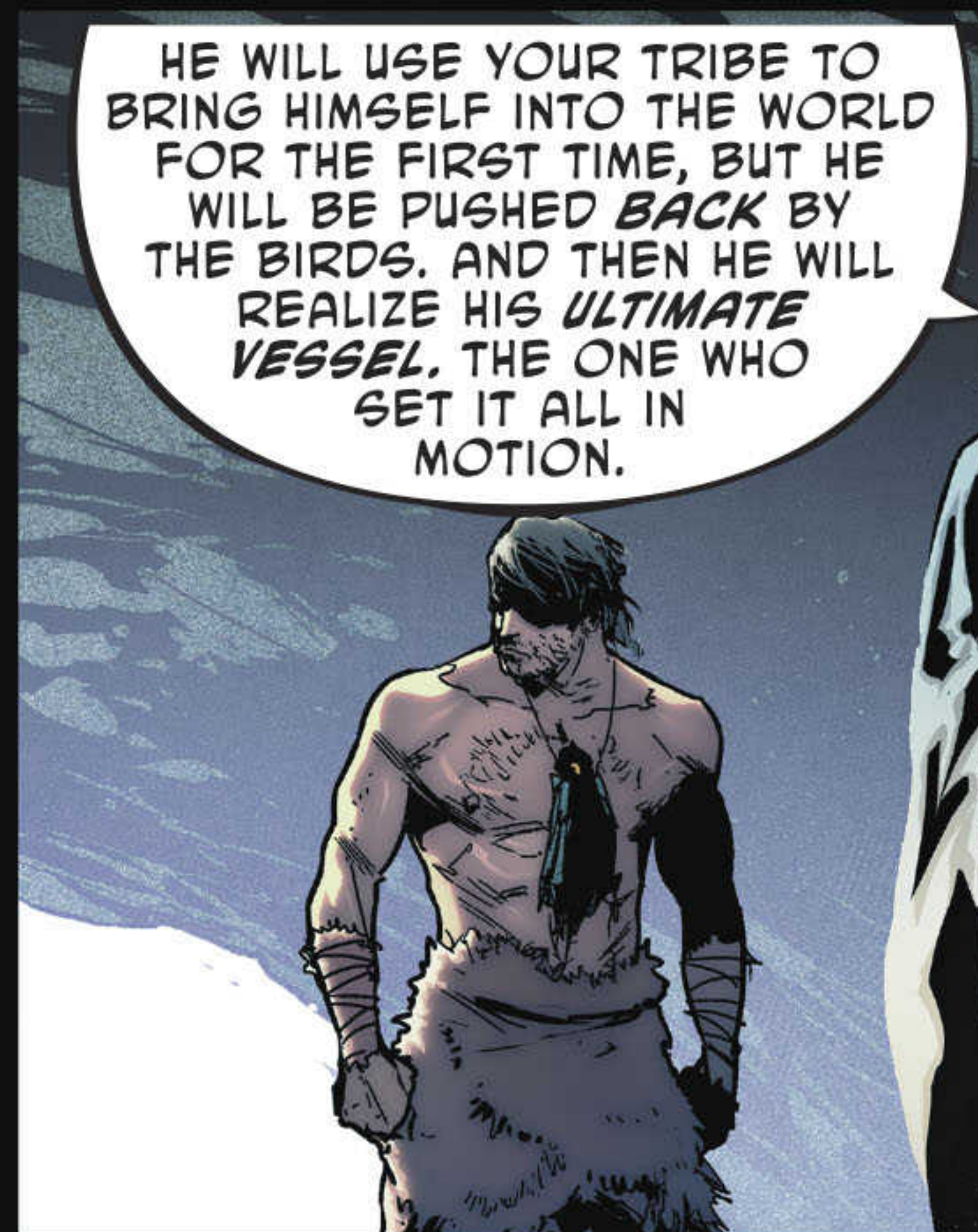
NO.
DAMMIT.

THAT'S *ALL*
WRONG. THIS IS
ANOTHER STORY
ENTIRELY.

THE TWO
STORIES ARE
ONE.

DON'T
YOU SEE? DON'T
YOU *UNDERSTAND*?
THEY ALWAYS
HAVE BEEN.

IT SAW YOU
WHEN YOU ARRIVED
IN THIS TIME, PURSUED
BY THE COSMIC HORROR,
THE HYPER-ADAPTOR. IT
SAW YOU INSPIRE A NEW
TRIBE OF MAN, ALL
BEARING *HIS* GREAT
SYMBOL.

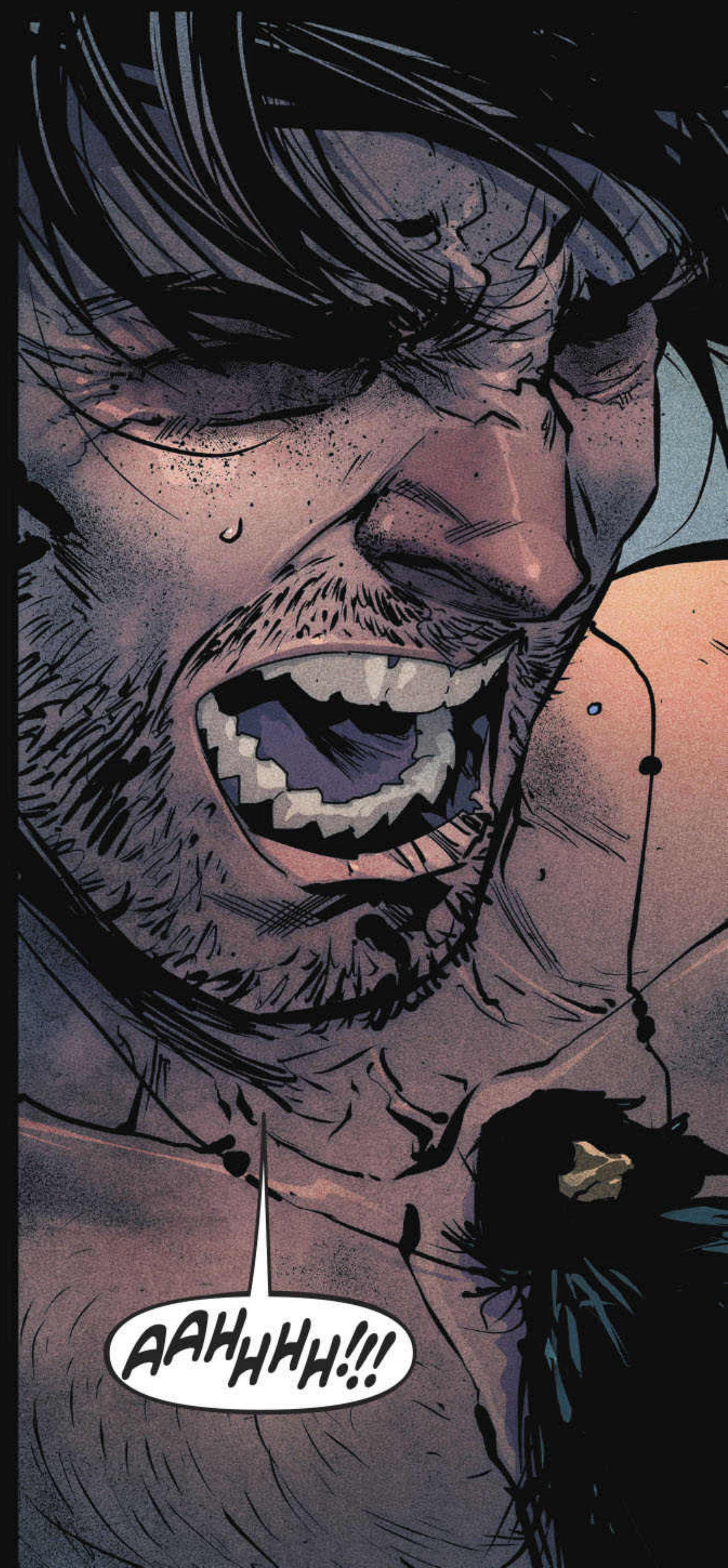


HE WILL USE YOUR TRIBE TO
BRING HIMSELF INTO THE WORLD
FOR THE FIRST TIME, BUT HE
WILL BE PUSHED *BACK* BY
THE BIRDS. AND THEN HE WILL
REALIZE HIS *ULTIMATE*
VESSEL. THE ONE WHO
SET IT ALL IN
MOTION.

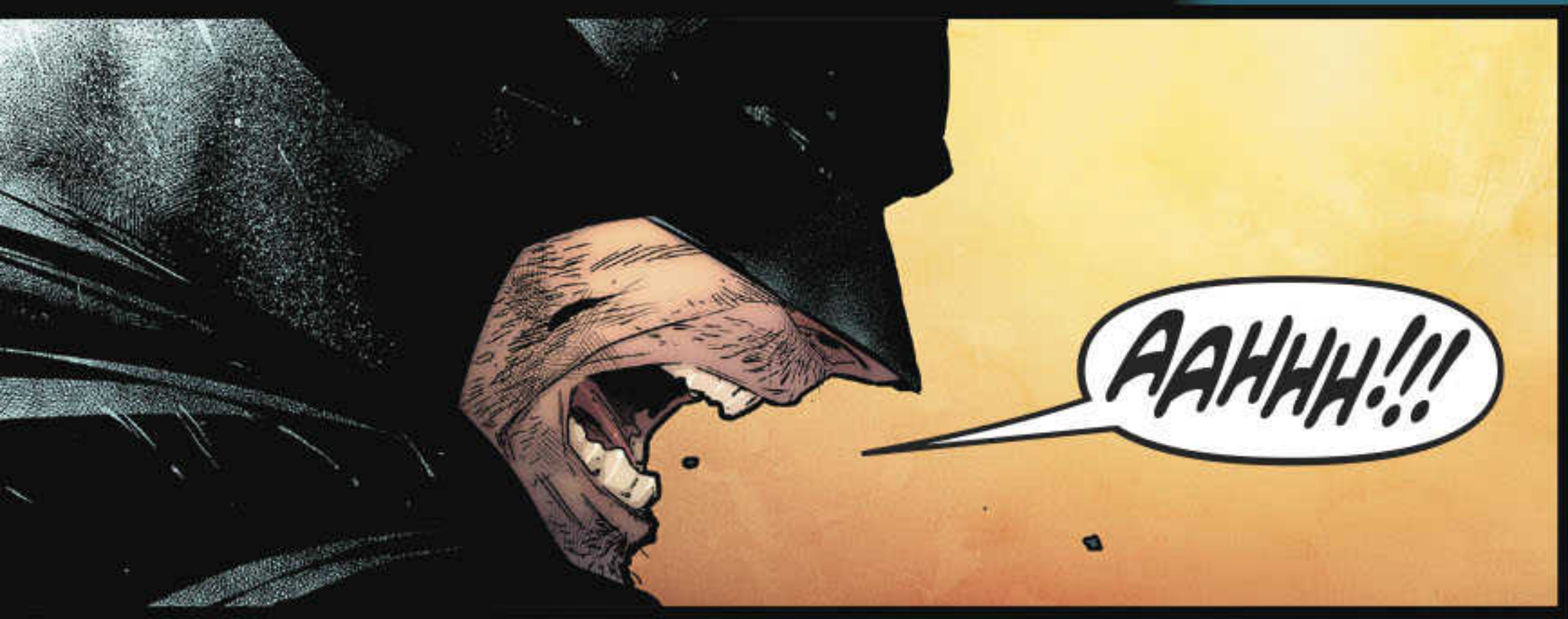
THE
ONE HE
SAW AT THE
BEGINNING.



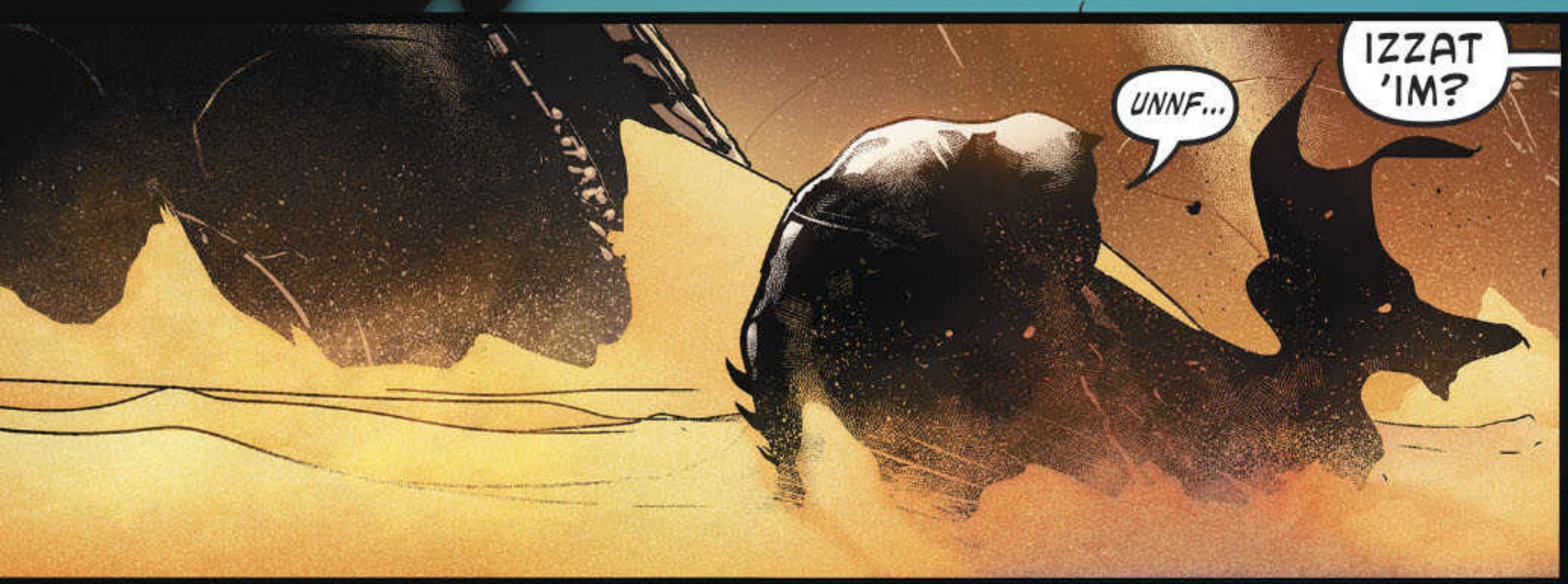
AND HE
WILL MARK
YOU AS
THE ONE.



AAHHHH!!!



AAHHH!!!



UNNF...

IZZAT
'IM?



NAH
POSSIBLE.
BATMAN
GONE.

BIG
BOTS BURNED
THE WORLD, AND
BATMAN GONE.
CAN'VR COME
BACK.

ISS
HIM...I
KNOW...I
SEE...



HNH.
CLARITY.

YOU
NEED TO
REMEMBER,
BRUCE. NONE
OF THIS IS
REAL.

THESE
ARE ALL TRICKS
TO GET INSIDE
YOUR HEAD. TO
MAKE YOU LOSE
YOUR FOCUS.

REMEMBER
THE MANTRA.

YOU
ARE TRAPPED
IN THE **DARK
MULTIVERSE**. YOU
NEED TO FIND
A WAY OUT.
NOW.



LOOK!
IT IS! IT
IS HIM!

**BATMAN
SAVE US!!**

HAWK
PATROL.
MOVE IN.

BUDDA
BUDDA

BUDDA
BUDDA

THAT
VOICE...

DAMIAN?

WE
TOLD YOU
NEVER TO COME
BACK, FATHER. I
BEGGED YOU
TO LISTEN.

WE FOUGHT
YOUR WAY, WITH
YOUR CODES, AND
THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED.
I ALWAYS FEARED I
WAS THE ONE WHO'D
MAKE THE BAT THE
SYMBOL OF
DOOM.

BUT
IT WAS
YOU. IT WAS
ALWAYS...

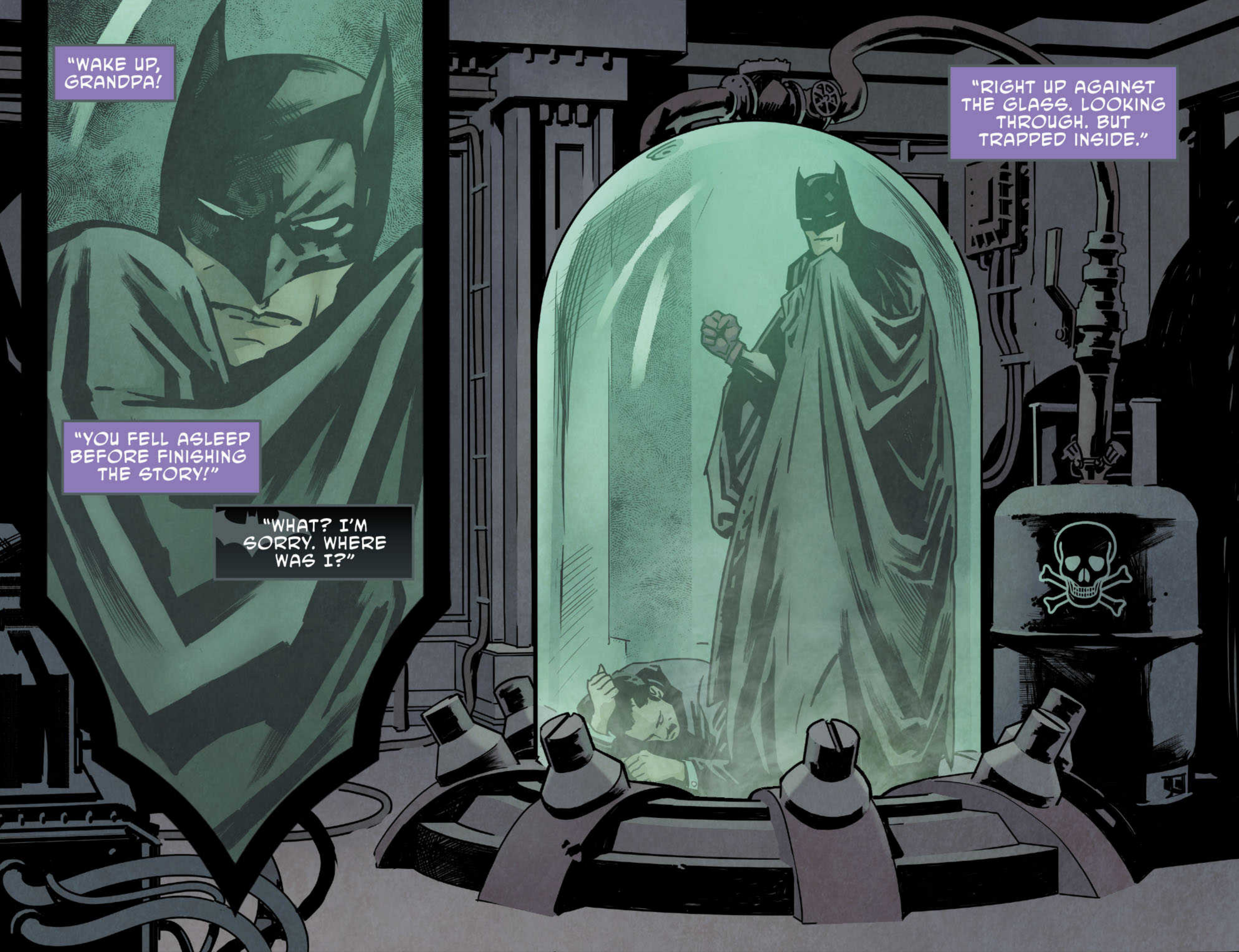
YOU.

THIS ISN'T REAL,
SON. LISTEN TO
ME. WE AREN'T
REALLY--

OPEN
FIRE.

NO.

"WAKE UP!"

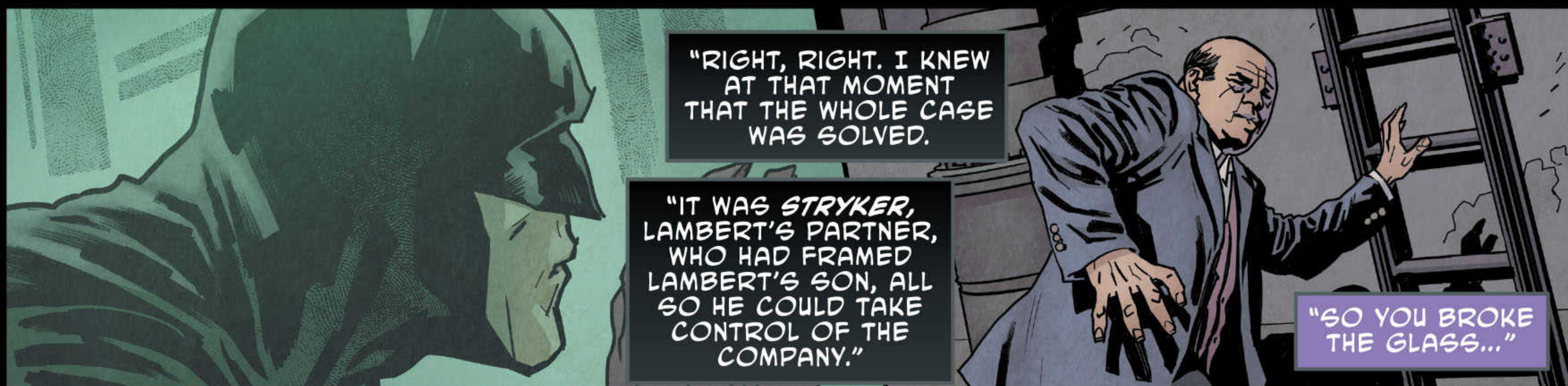


"WAKE UP, GRANDPA!"

"YOU FELL ASLEEP BEFORE FINISHING THE STORY!"

"WHAT? I'M SORRY. WHERE WAS I?"

"RIGHT UP AGAINST THE GLASS, LOOKING THROUGH. BUT TRAPPED INSIDE."



"RIGHT, RIGHT. I KNEW AT THAT MOMENT THAT THE WHOLE CASE WAS SOLVED."

"IT WAS *STRYKER*, LAMBERT'S PARTNER, WHO HAD FRAMED LAMBERT'S SON, ALL SO HE COULD TAKE CONTROL OF THE COMPANY."

"SO YOU BROKE THE GLASS..."



"YES, I BROKE THE GLASS... AND I CHASED HIM DOWN..."

"WHAT IS IT, GRANDPA? WHAT'S WRONG?"



"THIS ISN'T THE STORY I WANT TO TELL ANYMORE, JANET."

"BUT WHY?"

"I NEED TO FIND... SOMETHING. A WAY BACK UP. A WINDOW..."



"NO."

"YOU NEED TO GO DOWN THE LADDER, GRANDPA."

"NOW."



DOWN THE...
WHAT...

THIS HAS GONE TOO FAR! I WON'T BE A PARTY TO MURDER!

QUIET, JEFFERSON! LET WAYNE THROUGH. WE MUST COMPLETE THE CEREMONY OF THE BAT. WE'VE PREPARED ALL THE STEPS ALREADY.

NOW THOMAS, IF WE'RE NOT QUICK...



GO ON, DO IT!

THOMAS, YOU CAN'T MEAN TO TRULY HARM THE GIRL?! THERE ARE NO REAL DEMON--



IT'S HERE! IT'S ALL AROUND US! BARBATHOS IS COMING!

WAYNE! WE MUST LEAVE THIS DAMNED PLACE AT ONCE!



BUT NO...THE WOMAN...

WE NEED TO SAVE HER...



THEY DON'T COME BACK FOR ME. THEY NAIL THE DOOR SHUT AND LET THE CAVERN BURN.

THE HEAT WILL BE UNBEARABLE, AND MY SKIN WILL MELT FROM MY BONES, BUT I WILL SERVE MY PURPOSE.

THEY WILL BUILD A GREAT CITY OVER MY GRAVE. A CITY MARKED BY HIM, WAITING FOR YOU.

THAT IS ALL THIS SACRIFICE IS MEANT FOR.

I AM DYING FOR YOU, BATMAN.

YOU ARE THE GREAT WAGON MEANT TO BEAR THE DARK GOD UNTO THE WORLD. THE FOOLS THOUGHT A SIMPLE MAIDEN WOULD DO THE JOB.

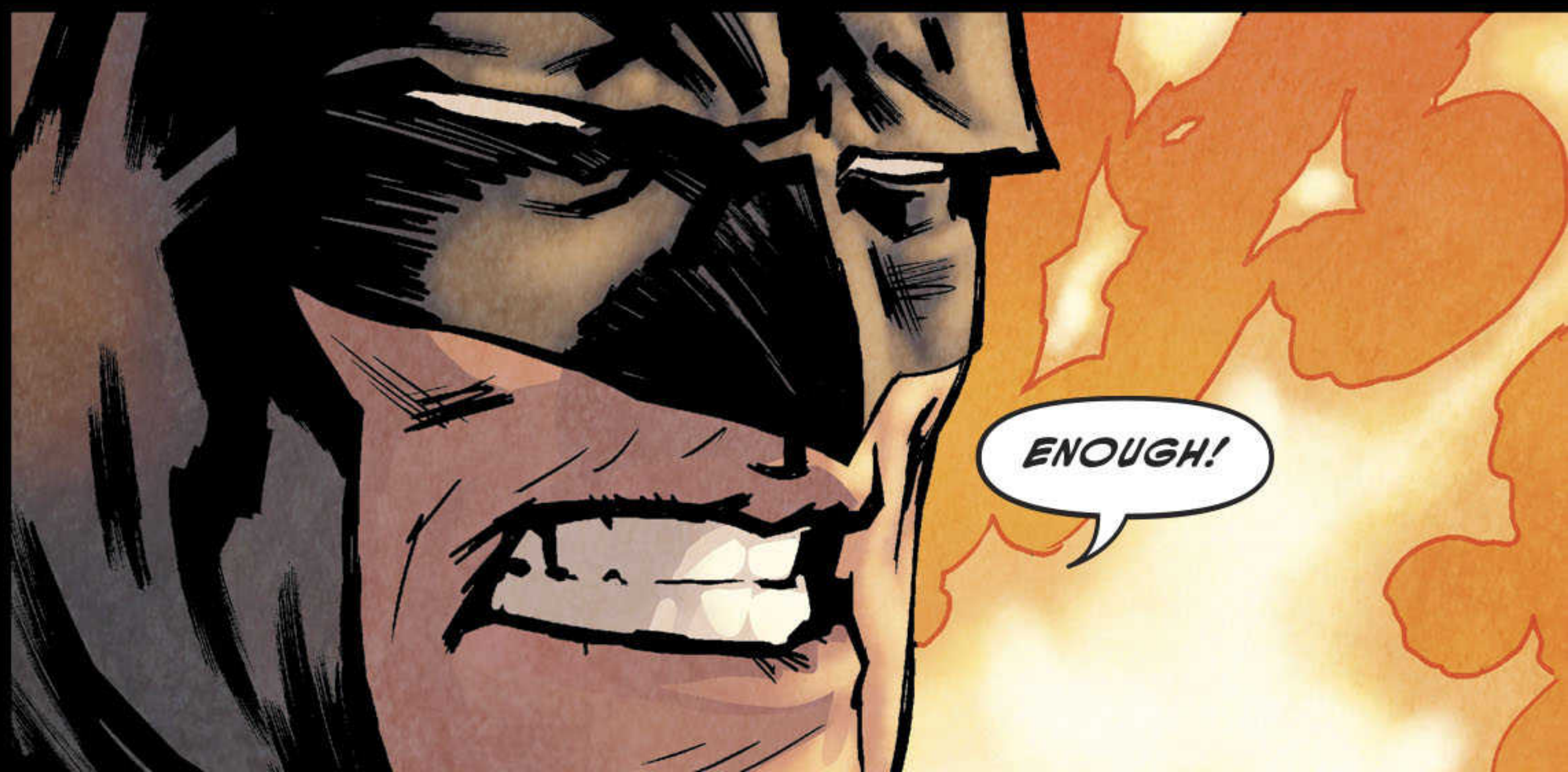
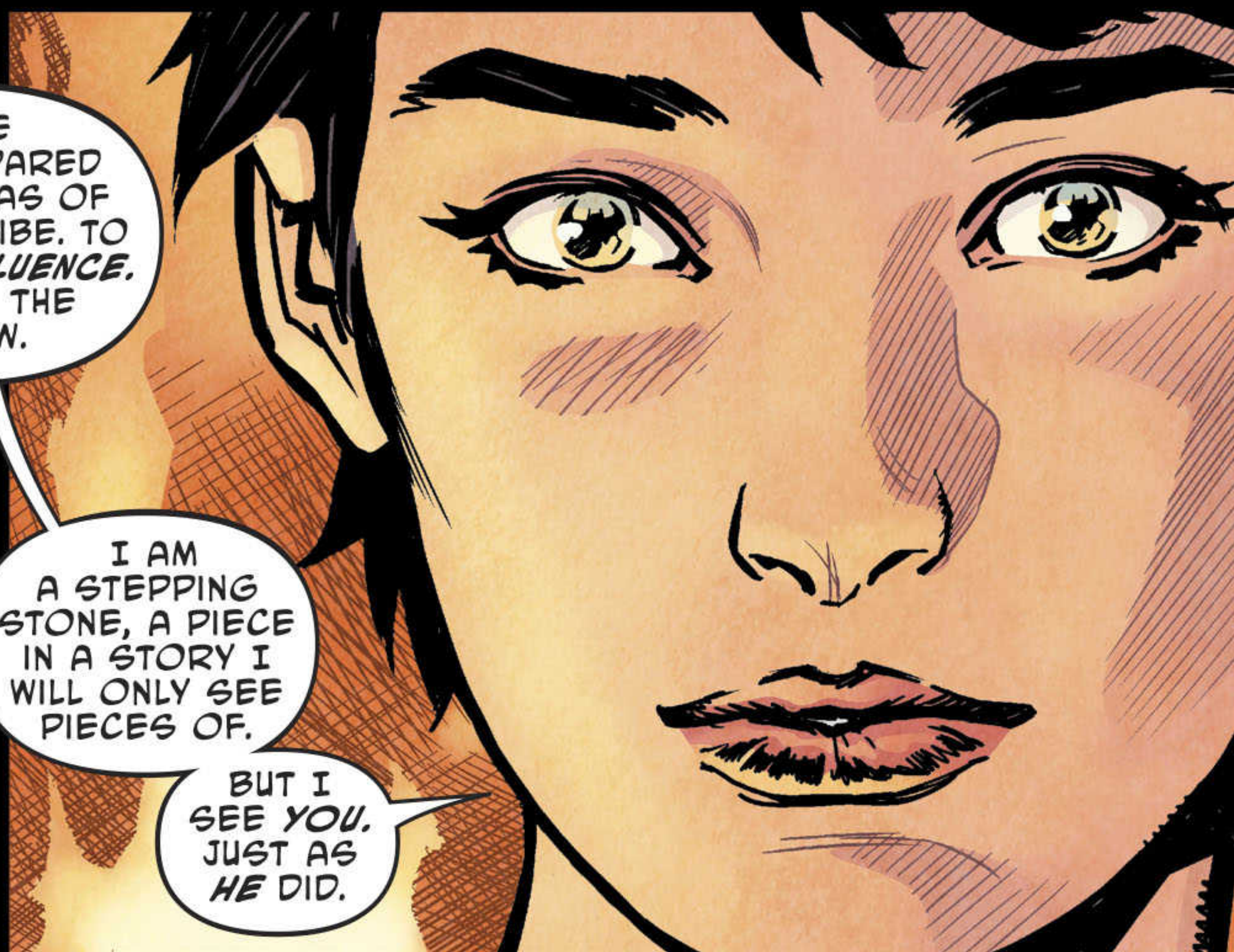
SO THEY PREPARED ME IN THE OLD WAYS, PASSED DOWN FROM THE DAWN OF MAN.



I HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY THE JUDAS OF THE BIRD TRIBE. TO GIVE HIM INFLUENCE. TO OPEN THE WINDOW.

I AM A STEPPING STONE, A PIECE IN A STORY I WILL ONLY SEE PIECES OF.

BUT I SEE YOU. JUST AS HE DID.



ENOUGH!



...ENOUGH...



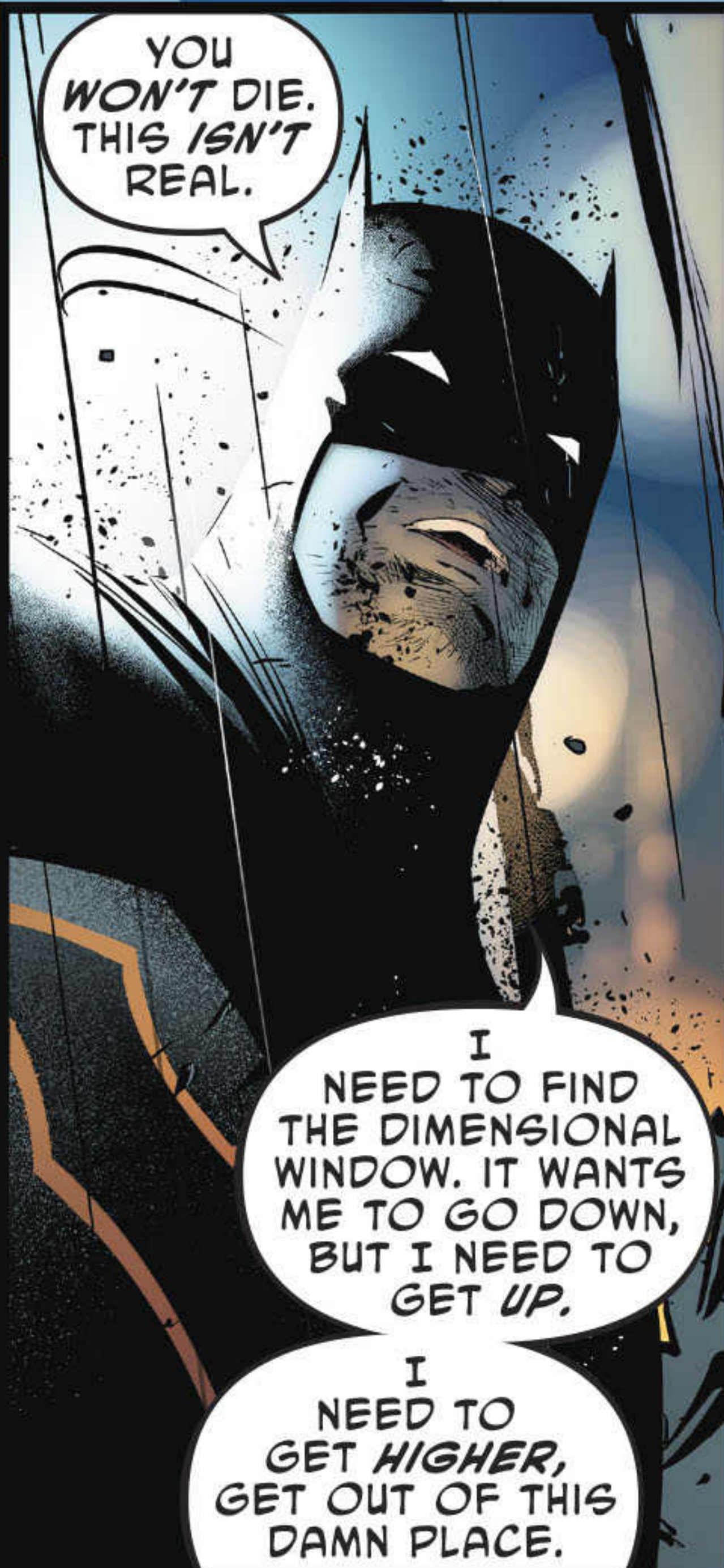
REMEMBER, CONTESTANTS! MAYOR JOKER SAYS THE ONLY RULE IN GOTHAM CITY IS THAT THERE ARE NO RULES!

THE GAME RESUMES IN THREE... TWO... ONE...



GET THAT LOOK OFF YOUR FACE. THEY'RE COMING TO KILL US.

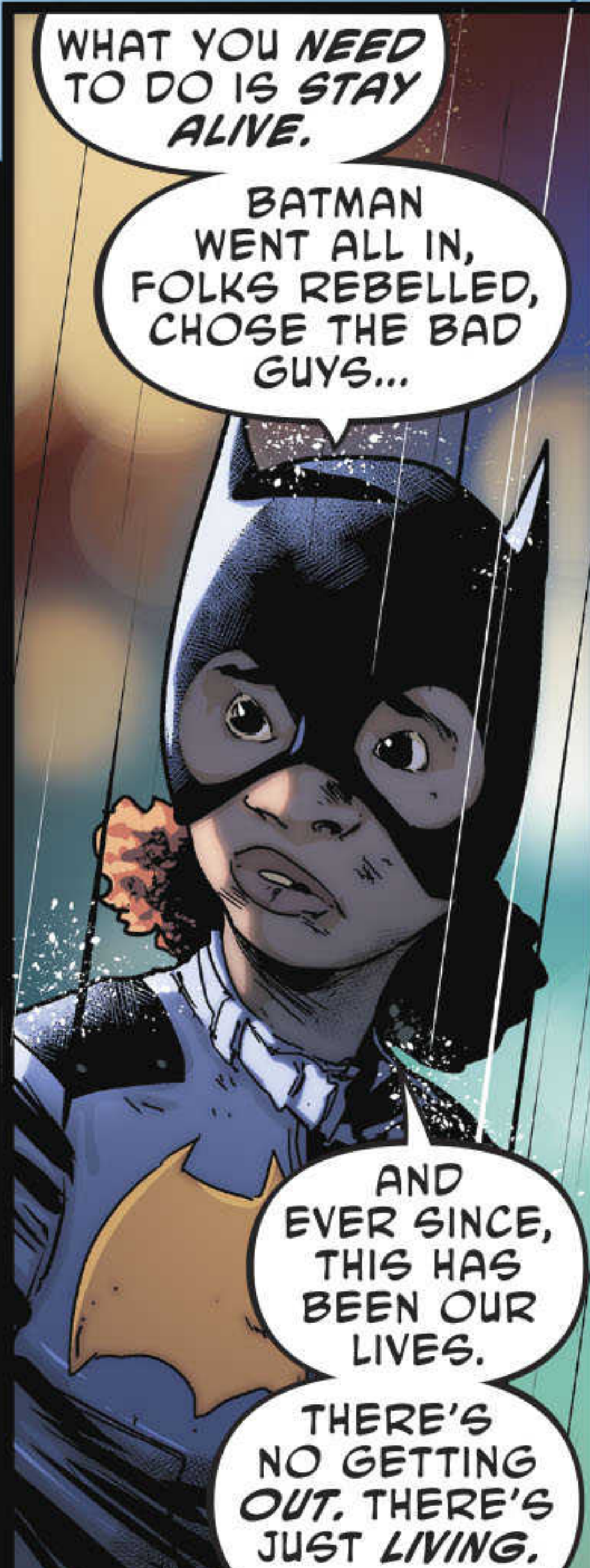
I... I DON'T WANT TO DIE.



YOU WON'T DIE. THIS ISN'T REAL.

I NEED TO FIND THE DIMENSIONAL WINDOW. IT WANTS ME TO GO DOWN, BUT I NEED TO GET UP.

I NEED TO GET HIGHER, GET OUT OF THIS DAMN PLACE.

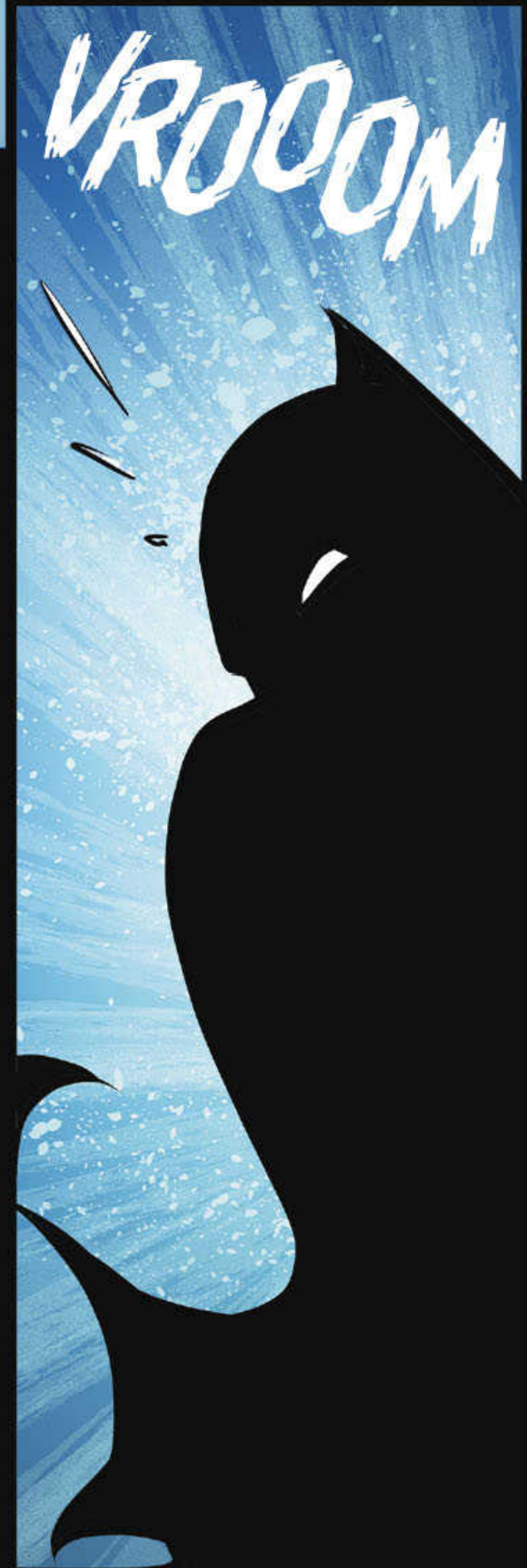


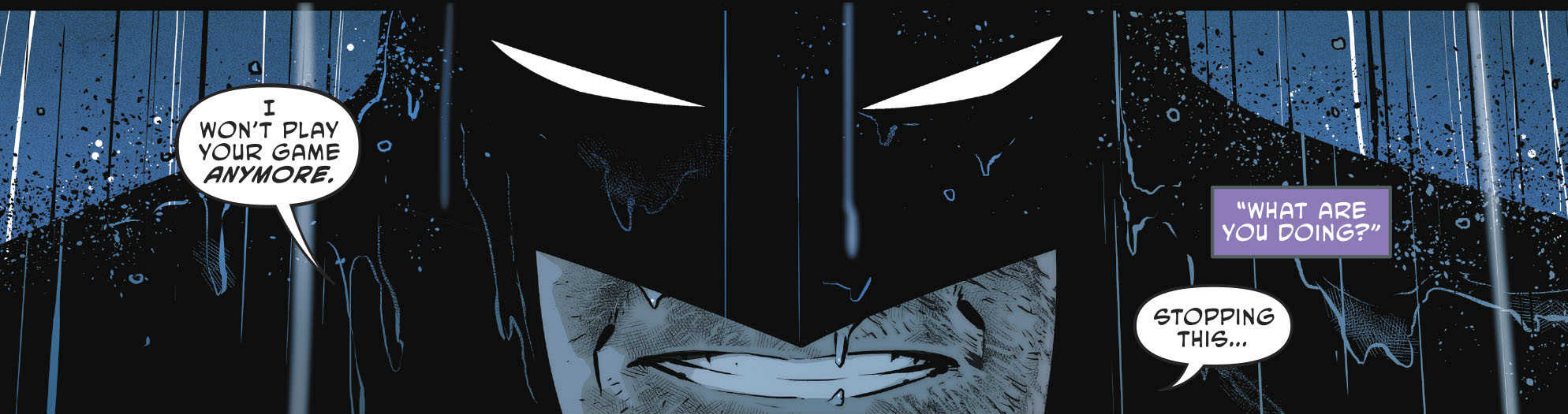
WHAT YOU NEED TO DO IS STAY ALIVE.

BATMAN WENT ALL IN, FOLKS REBELLED, CHOSE THE BAD GUYS...

AND EVER SINCE, THIS HAS BEEN OUR LIVES.

THERE'S NO GETTING OUT. THERE'S JUST LIVING.







...RIGHT NOW.



YOU...YOU
AIN'T GOING
TO TAKE ME
DOWN?

WHO
ARE YOU
REALLY?

TELL
ME!

NOW!!



...



HEH. YOU KNOW.
YOU'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN.



NO!
WAIT!



LOOK
CLOSER,
BRUCE.



"LOOK, AND
TELL ME WHAT
YOU SEE..."



I SEE...

...A BAT?



MY GOD... IT CAN'T BE...



THE METALS. OUR METALS... OH GOD, THEY'VE LACED WAYNE STEEL WITH... SOMETHING TERRIBLE.

THE TRIBE OF THE BAT, IT STILL--



AGH!!!

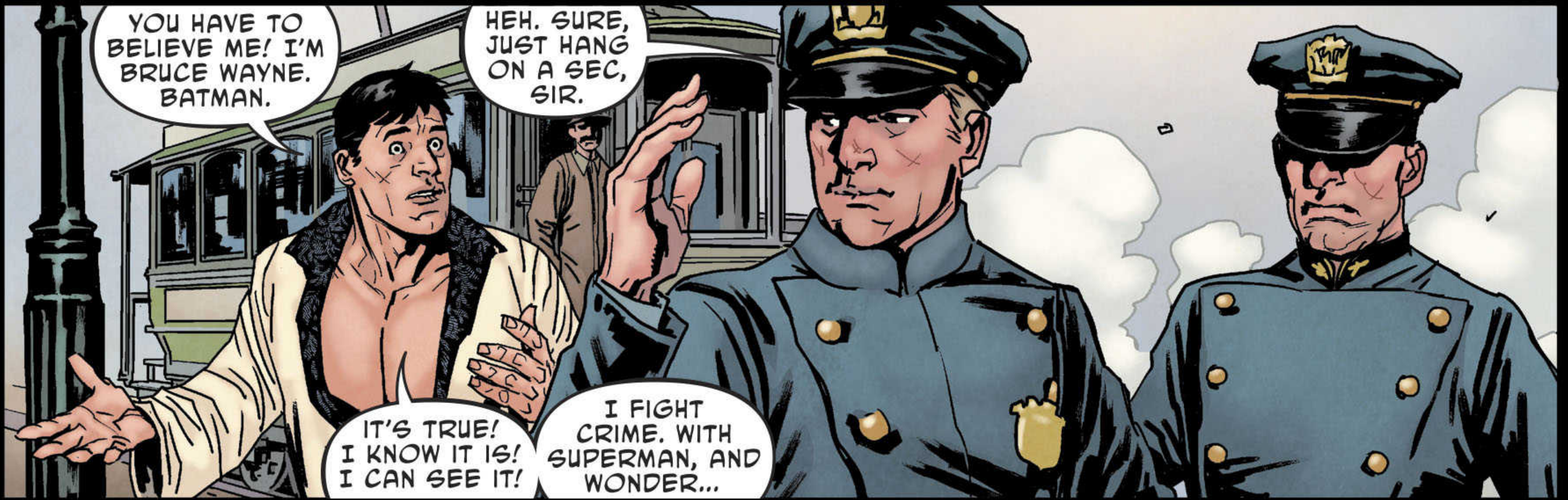
LIVES? YES, ALAN WAYNE. THE COURT OF OWLS' PLANS ARE BIGGER THAN YOU KNOW.

AND YOU WILL PLAY YOUR PART...



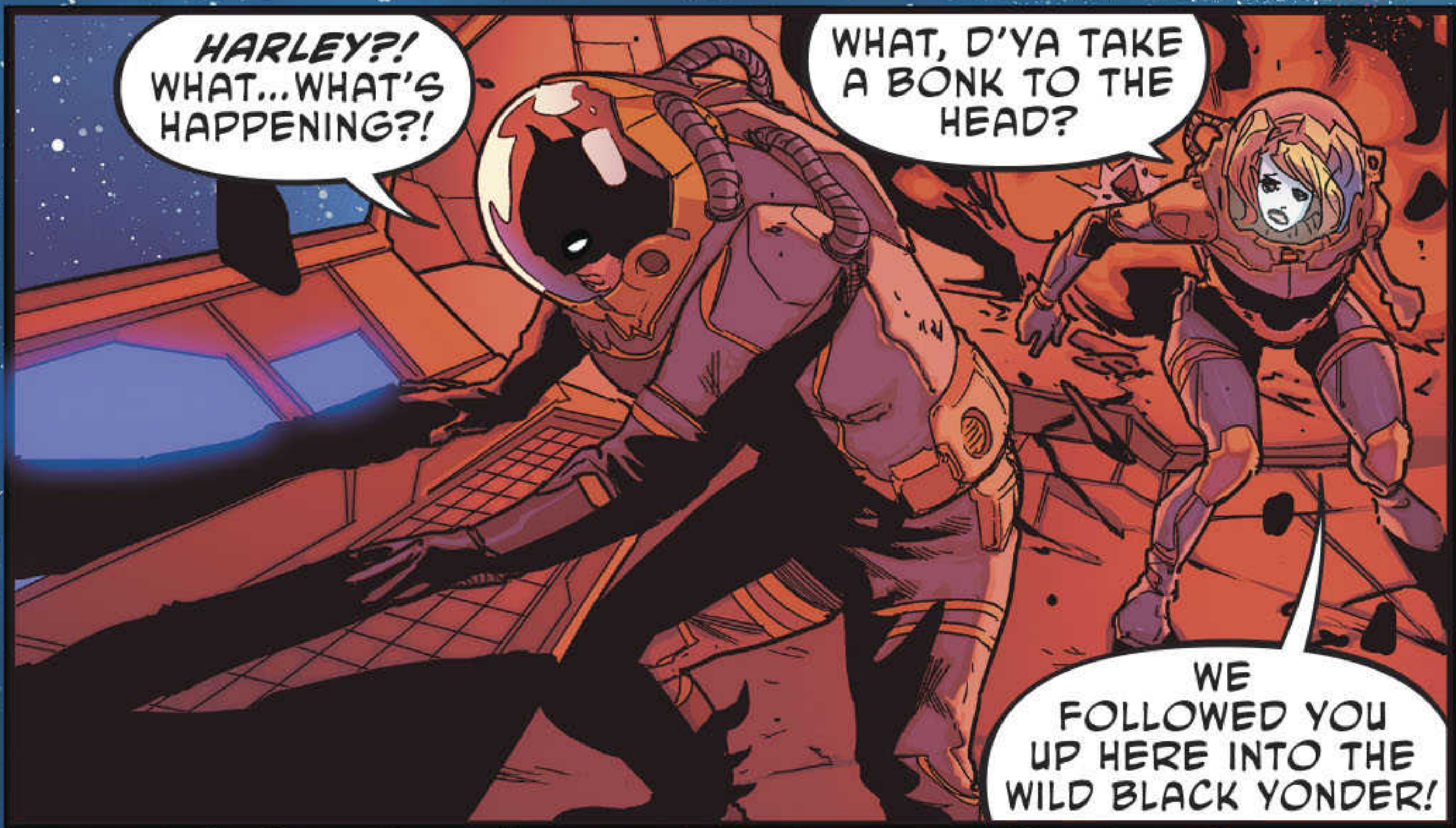
NO! NO, I'LL...







THE WINDOW, BATS! LOOK! THEY'RE KNOCKING!



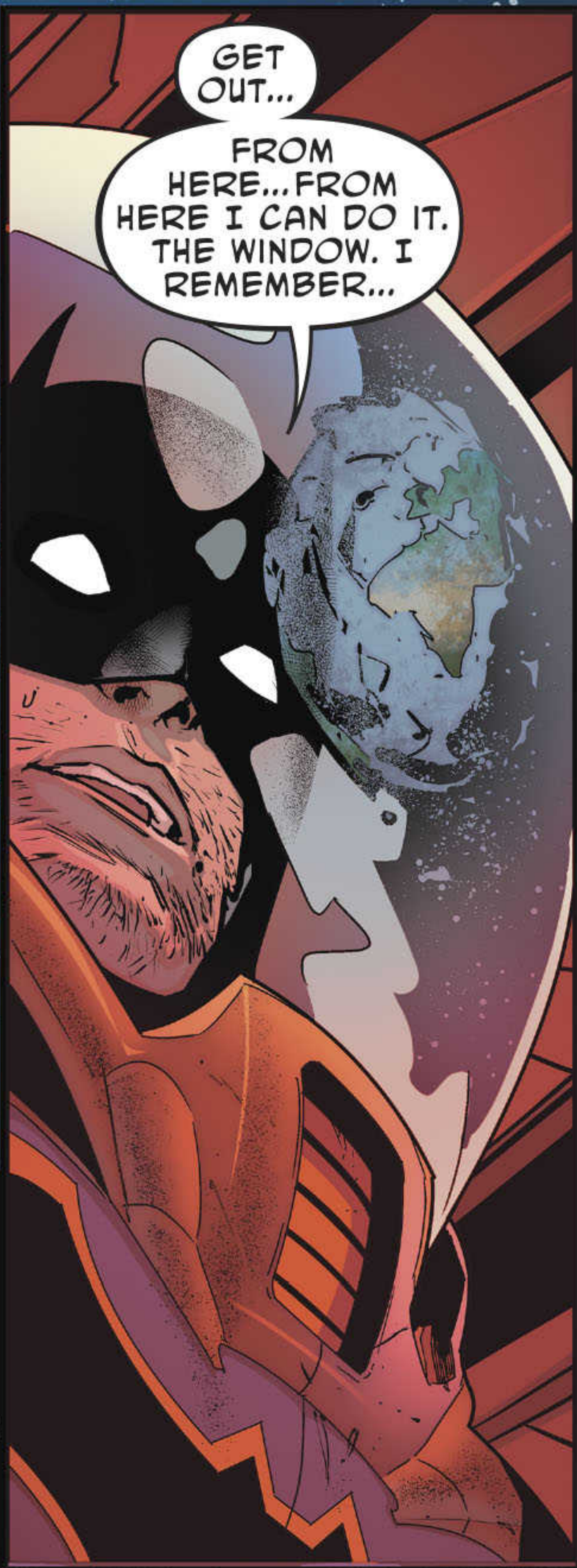
HARLEY?! WHAT...WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

WHAT, D'YA TAKE A BONK TO THE HEAD?

WE FOLLOWED YOU UP HERE INTO THE WILD BLACK YONDER!

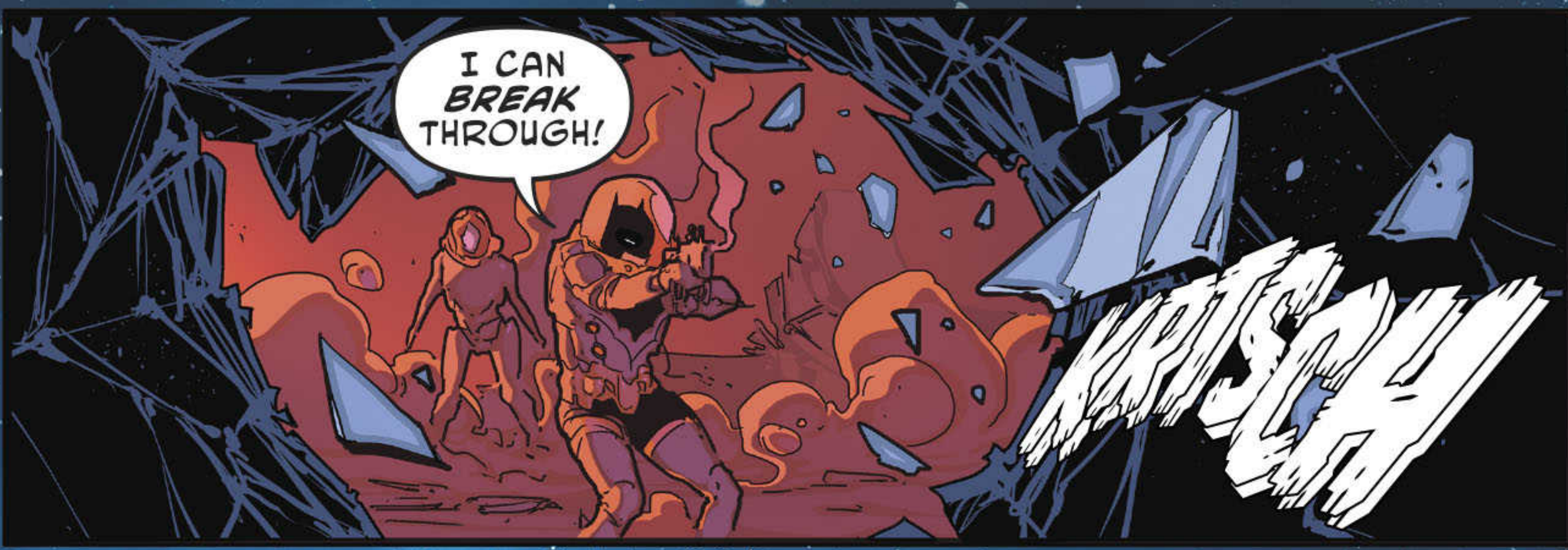
ALL TO AVOID THE JUSTICE WARS!

AND I QUOTE: "WE TRIED FIGHTING WITH RESTRAINT AND WITHOUT. ALL THAT'S LEFT TO DO IS GET OUT."



GET OUT...

FROM HERE...FROM HERE I CAN DO IT. THE WINDOW. I REMEMBER...



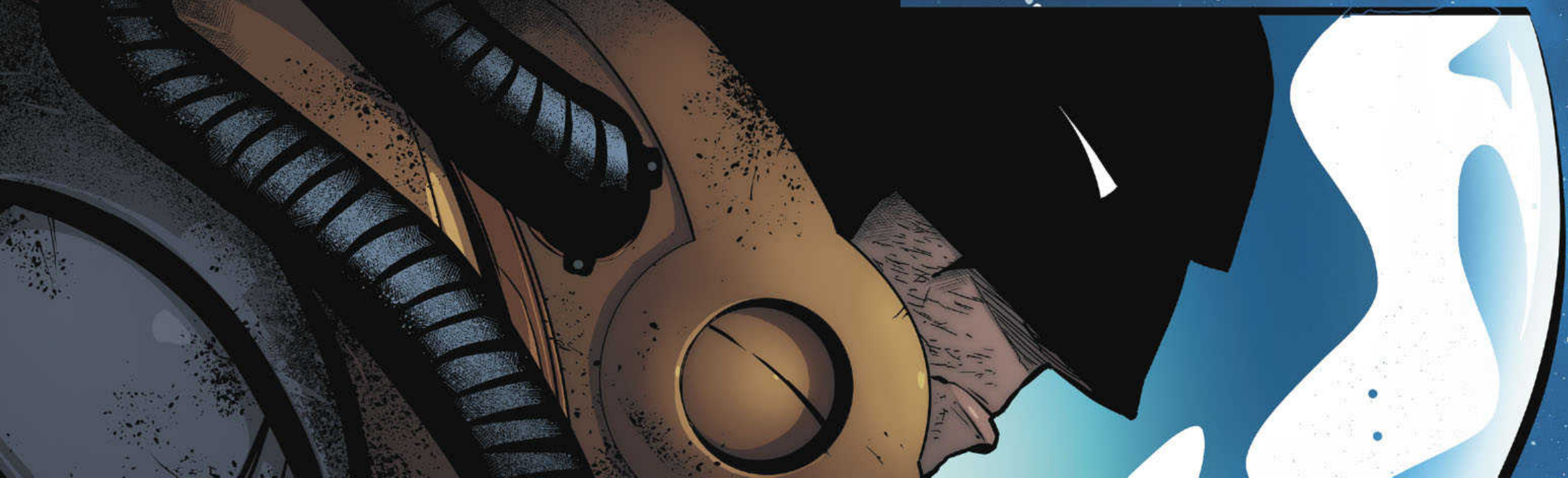
I CAN BREAK THROUGH!



WHAT, ARE YOU JUST GOING TO LEAVE US HERE?!



"YOU'RE MESSING UP THE STORY, GRANDPA."



LIKE HELL I AM.



"I'M TELLING YOU. THIS IS WHERE YOU GET YOUR MEDAL AND WIN THE DAY. LOOK AT THE MAYOR SMILING! WHY WOULD YOU--"

NO, "DEAR." THIS IS THE STORY. OF BATS... AND BIRDS.

BATMAN? WHO ARE YOU--

THE TRAJECTORY OF THE BIRDS...



THE *BIRDS* THAT ALWAYS SMASH THE WINDOW--

--WHERE ARE THEY TRYING TO GO...?



BIRDS CAN BE CONFUSED BY STRONG VIBRATIONS IN METAL. EVEN ATTRACTED TO THEM.

THE BIRDS ARE TRYING TO HELP ME. I SURROUND MYSELF WITH THEM, TO REMIND ME WHO I AM. *WHERE* I AM.

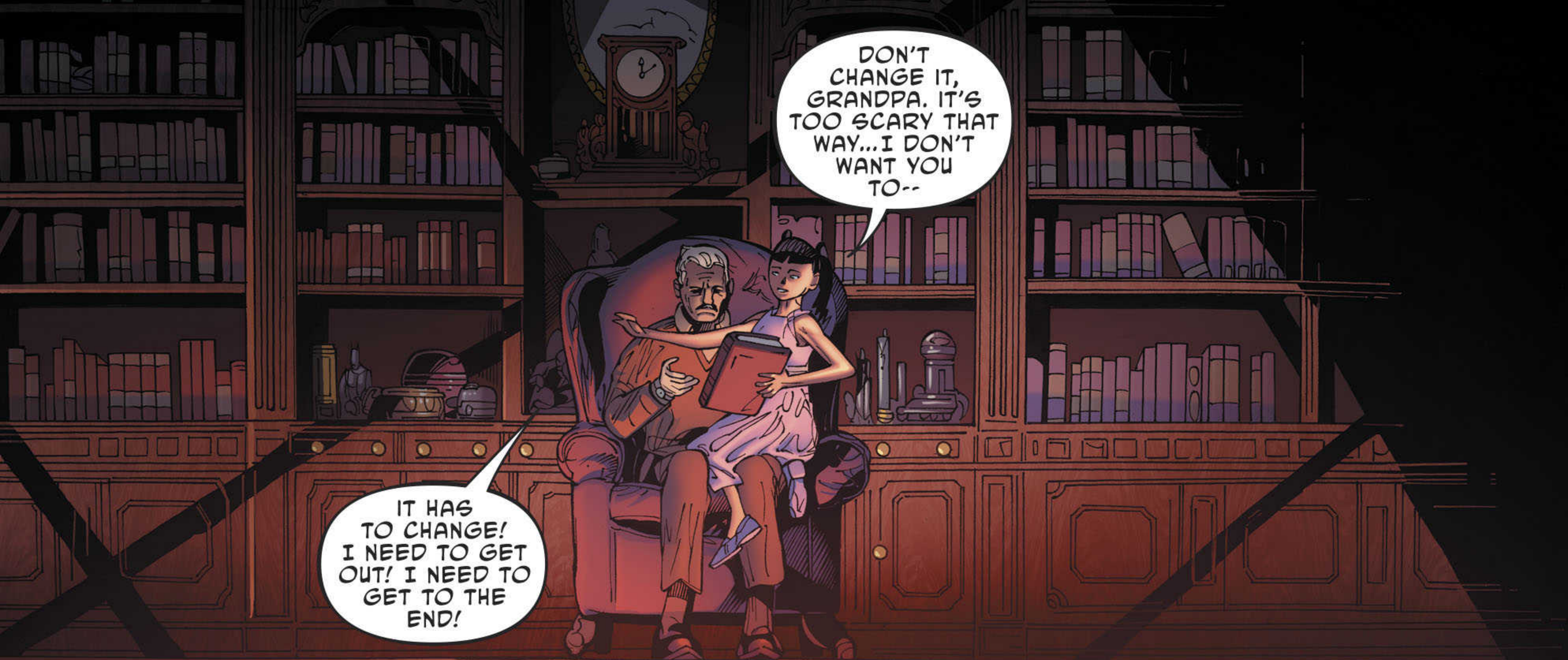


I AM NOT LOST. I AM BATMAN. AND I AM TRAPPED IN THE DARK MULTIVERSE.

BUT I WILL FIND THE WINDOW. I WILL FIND THE WAY OUT.

A SECRET PASSAGE?

"NO!"



DON'T CHANGE IT, GRANDPA. IT'S TOO SCARY THAT WAY... I DON'T WANT YOU TO--

IT HAS TO CHANGE! I NEED TO GET OUT! I NEED TO GET TO THE END!



I'LL SHOW YOU THE @#\$% END!



AAAGH!



SCAPER SCAPER



COME OUT AND FACE ME!



WHERE...
WHERE ARE
YOU?!

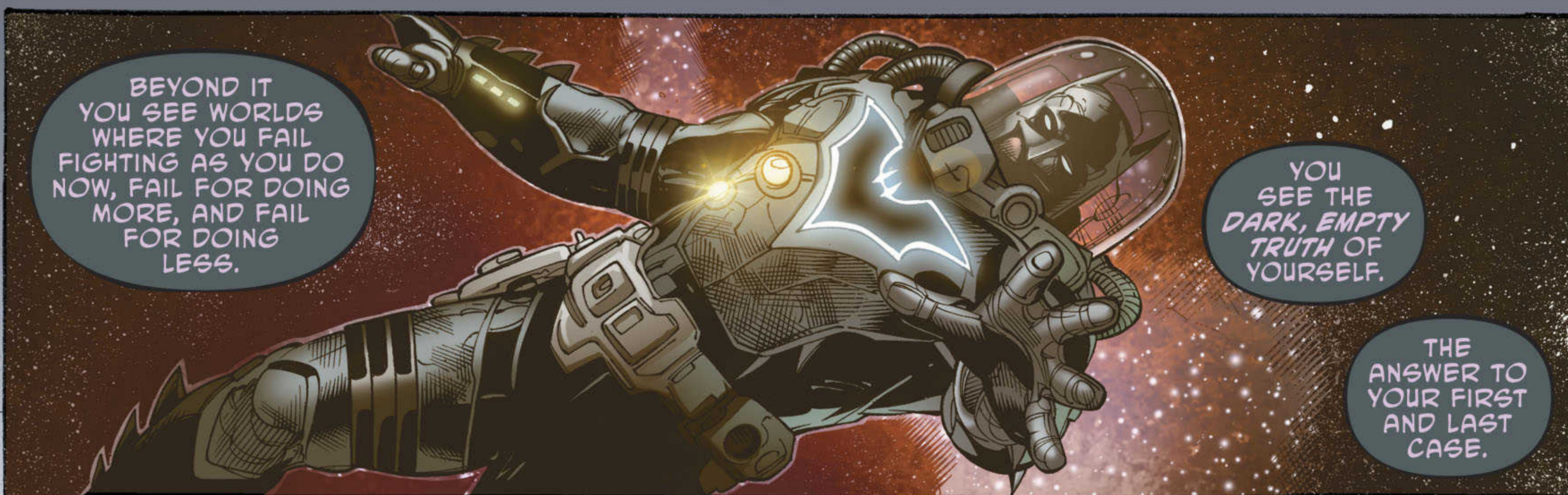


BEHIND IT
ALL, BRUCE.
LOOK BEHIND
IT, AND WHAT
DO YOU
SEE?

I SEE
NOTHING!



I KNOW
WHAT YOU SEE...
BEHIND IT YOU SEE
DARK BIRDS AND BATS
WORKING TOGETHER
TO SHAPE YOU
FROM YOUR FIRST
CASE.



BEYOND IT
YOU SEE WORLDS
WHERE YOU FAIL
FIGHTING AS YOU DO
NOW, FAIL FOR DOING
MORE, AND FAIL
FOR DOING
LESS.

YOU
SEE THE
DARK, EMPTY
TRUTH OF
YOURSELF.

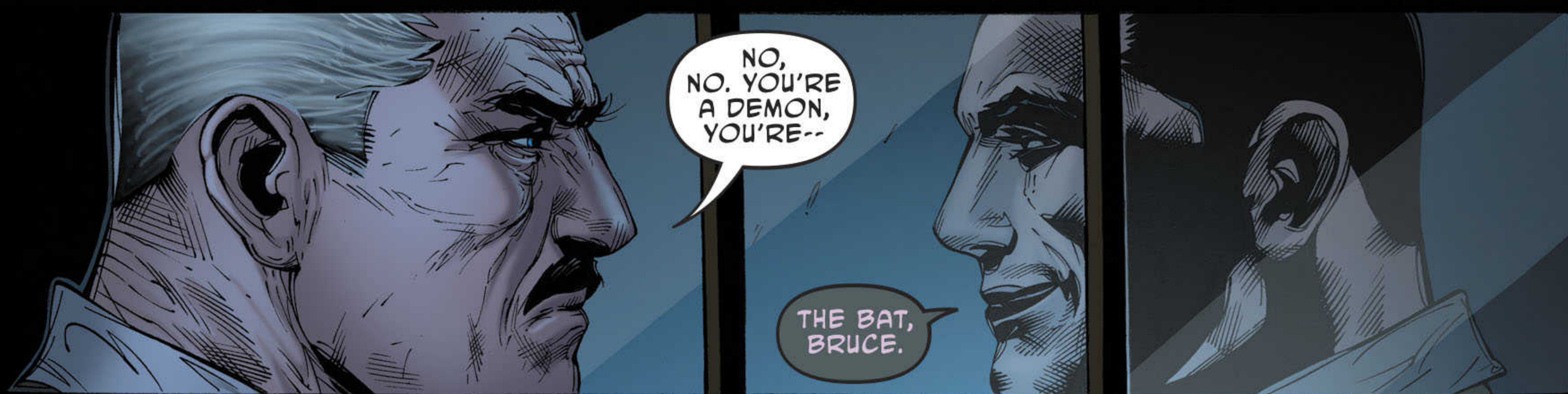
THE
ANSWER TO
YOUR FIRST
AND LAST
CASE.



WHERE
ARE
YOU?!



I'M
RIGHT
HERE.





YOU'RE NOTHING!



YOU'RE--



I AM THE BAT AND I AM THE FATHER.

I MADE YOU BELIEVE YOU WERE A GOOD DETECTIVE. THAT YOU COULD SOLVE THAT FIRST CASE.



I HAVE HELPED YOU OVER AND OVER, MADE YOU THE HERO YOU ARE, ALL SO YOU COULD BE MY GREAT WAGON WHEN I TOOK YOU.

SHUT UP! I'LL GET OUT!

NO YOU WON'T. YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN HERE FOR YEARS... DECADES... TRAPPED WITH ME AND THE TRUTH.



NOOO!!!

YES.

THE TRUTH IS, YOU ARE *NOTHING* WITHOUT ME.

YOU ARE PLAIN. LESS THAN PLAIN.

THIS PLACE, MY REALM, IT IS FULL OF WORLDS CREATED FROM *FEARS AND FAILINGS*, AND YOU...YOU HAVE *MORE* THAN ANY OTHER HERO, MY SON.

WHOLE GALAXIES OF WORLDS BUILT BY THE UNSPOKEN TERRORS IN YOUR HEART.

I SHOWED YOU THREE, BUT THERE ARE THOUSANDS. LOOK AROUND YOU.

PEOPLE THINK YOU ARE A GREAT HERO OF HUMANITY, MAYBE THE GREATEST. THEY STRIVE TO BE LIKE YOU, ALL BECAUSE I WILLED IT.

SO, WHEN YOUR NATURE WAS REVEALED, THEY WOULD SHRINK BACK TO THE DARK. NOW LOOK!

LOOK!!!

BECAUSE *THIS* IS WHO YOU ARE WITHOUT MY HELP.





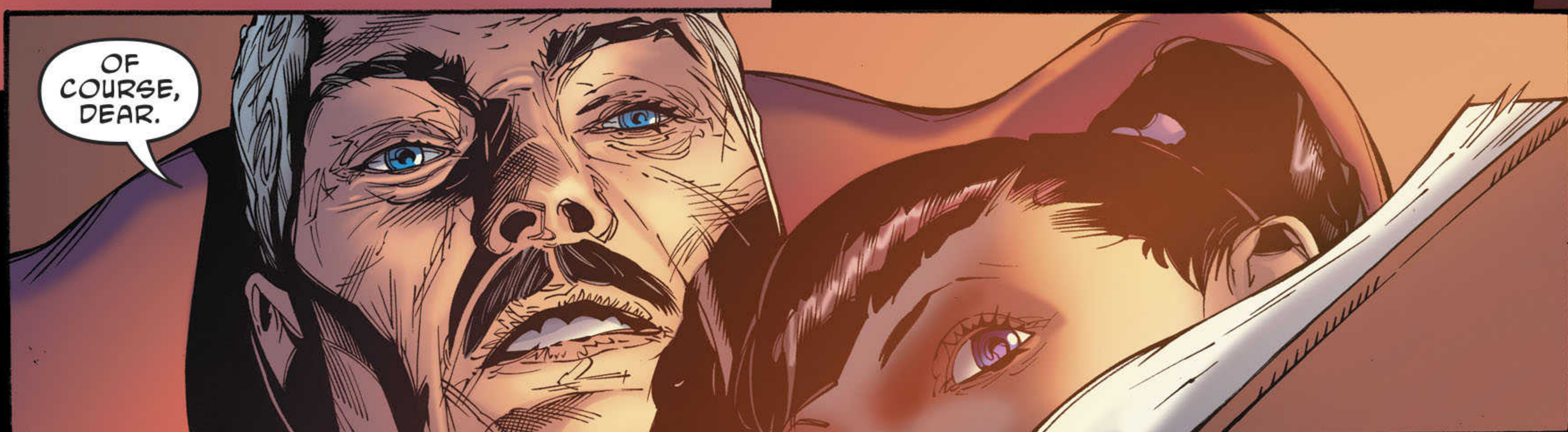


GRANDPA
BRUCE?

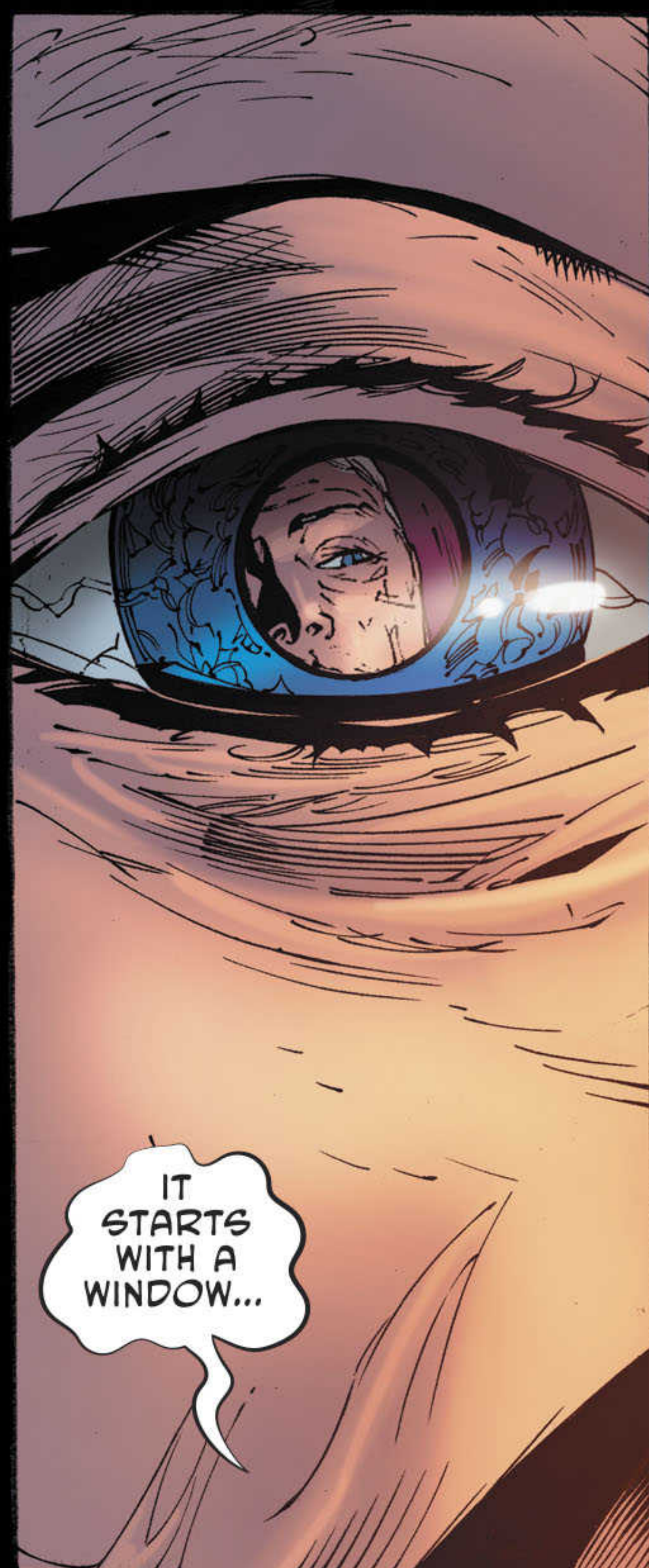
JANET?
I'M SO SORRY,
HONEY. I MUST
HAVE FALLEN
ASLEEP.

WHERE
AM I
AGAIN?

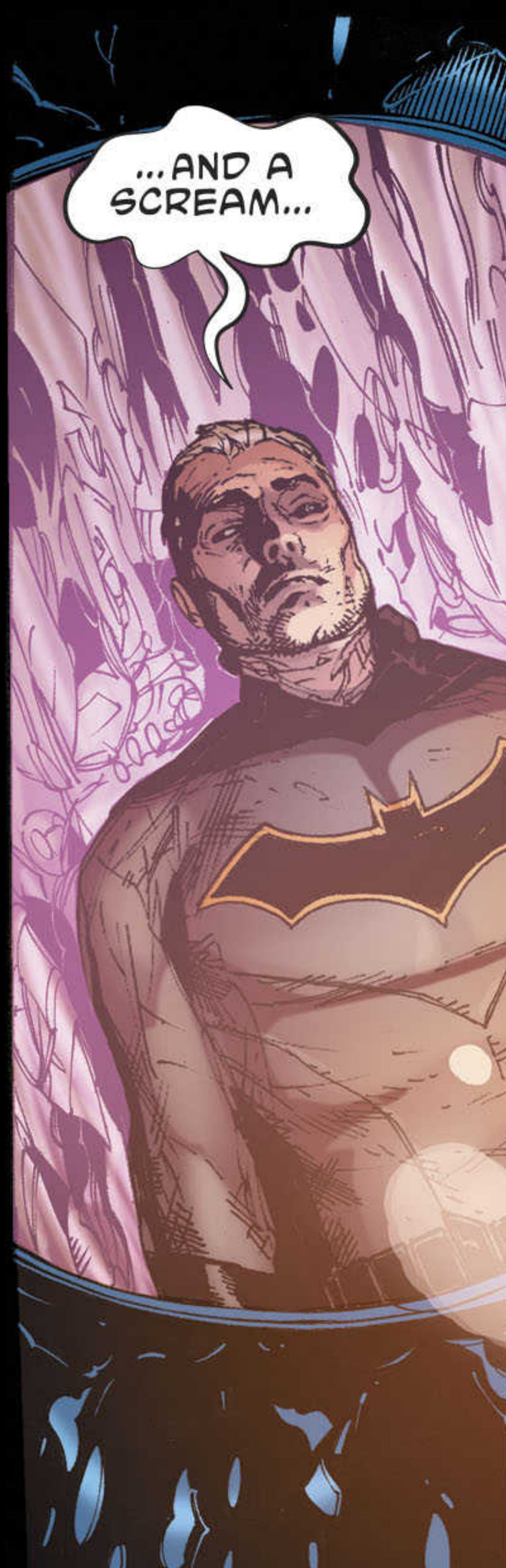
YOU'RE AT
THE BEGINNING,
SILLY. YOU WERE
STARTING
OVER.



OF
COURSE,
DEAR.



IT
STARTS
WITH A
WINDOW...



...AND A
SCREAM...



...LOST
TO THE
DARK...



TO BE CONTINUED IN
**DARK NIGHTS:
METAL #4!**